

SPECIAL 100TH ISSUE: 148 PAGES OF PHOTO INSPIRATION

March 2015 / £5

Digital SLR Photography

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100

Amazing photo gems

BOOST YOUR PHOTO KNOW-HOW WITH A TON OF BRILLIANT IDEAS, ADVICE & TECHNIQUES

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ESSENTIAL SKILLS
TAKE BETTER PICTURES
WITH OUR EXPERT ADVICE



CORNISH CONTEST
TWO LEADING LANDSCAPE
PROS GO HEAD-TO-HEAD



FAMILY PORTRAITS
BRETT HARKNESS' SECRETS
TO GREAT SISTER SHOTS



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"Happy birthday to us, happy birthday to us; happy birthday
dear *Digital SLR Photography*, happy birthday to us..."

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Welcome



WELCOME TO THE MARCH 2015 issue of *Digital SLR Photography* magazine. We're in an exultant mood this month as we're celebrating the achievement of reaching our 100th issue! I don't think that qualifies us for a telegram from HRH The Queen, but nonetheless we're proud to have reached this milestone and we'd like to thank all of our readers for supporting us along the way.

A retrospective of our first century of issues can be found on page 12, plus to celebrate the big one-zero-zero, we've put together *100 Photo Gems* (page 55), a massive article providing you with ideas, inspiration and advice to help you further improve your photo skills. To add a little professional spice to the mix, we've set our two most regular contributors, Ross Hoddinott and Helen Dixon, a landscape photo challenge – you can see how they fared on page 76. And with the number 100 in mind, this month's competition gives you the chance to win one of Fujifilm's most popular cameras, the brilliant X100T.

As always, there is plenty of technique, expert advice and photo inspiration, as well as gear reviews to keep you busy this month. On behalf of everyone at *Digital SLR Photography*, thanks for helping us reach 100. All the best!

Daniel Lezano Editor



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ON THIS MONTH'S COVER...

Professional landscape
photographer Helen Dixon
shot this cover image
exclusively for us as one of
the challenges we set our
longest-running contributors
to celebrate our special 100th
issue. See what else she
conjures up with fellow pro
Ross Hoddinott on p76.



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You can get your monthly fix of *Digital SLR Photography* inspiration and advice direct to your door or mobile device by subscribing to our print and/or digital editions. We always have some great money-saving offers or free gifts for subscribers, too! For more details, see page 90.



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CONTRIBUTING THIS MONTH...



Daniel Lezano

With over 30 years' experience as an enthusiast photographer and almost 20 years on photo magazines, editor Lezano is as passionate as ever about photography, in particular portraits.



Caroline Schmidt

Deputy editor of *Digital SLR Photography* magazine, Caroline specialises in portrait photography but is also a Photoshop expert and an experienced magazine journalist.



Jordan Butters

With a finger always on the pulse of photography, Jordan turns his hand to most things: he's our social media master, senior features writer and talented resident pro photographer.



Ross Hoddinott OUTDOOR

He's not only an award-winning nature photographer, a leading expert in landscape and wildlife photography, he's a top tutor, too. www.rosshoddinott.co.uk



Ben Hall WILDLIFE

A renowned wildlife photographer, author and tutor, Ben applies his expert knowledge to help improve your wildlife photography skills. www.benhallphoto.com



Helen Dixon LANDSCAPES

Helen is living the dream, having given up a full-time job to live in Cornwall and become a professional landscape photographer. helendixonphotography.co.uk



Catherine MacBride STILL-LIFE

Creative genius when it comes to still-life images, Catherine regularly provides pictures to stock libraries and shares her tutorials with you. www.catherinemacbride.com



Lee Frost LANDSCAPE & TRAVEL

A long-standing regular contributor, Lee is a fount of knowledge when it comes to shooting landscapes and delivering expert tutorials. www.leefrost.co.uk



Vincent Laforet COMMERCIAL

A Pulitzer Prize-winning commercial photographer. Vincent's recent Night Over project takes aerial photography to a new level. www.laforetvisuals.com



Brett Harkness PORTRAITS

You either want to be photographed by him or shoot like him. A master of portraits, fashion and weddings, Brett runs regular workshops in the UK. brettharknessphotography.com



Chris Ceaser LANDSCAPES

Professional landscape photographer who heads a series of one- and three-day photographic courses set in beautiful northern England. www.chrisceaser.com



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Portfolio

Adraga
by Jorge Feteira

www.jfeteira.com

"Adraga is a beautiful beach in the Sintra area of Portugal. I had planned for a different composition, but the tide was lower than expected. The reflections in the wet sand changed what I had in mind, so I repositioned myself to maximise the effect and was rewarded with an explosion of colour in the sky."

Canon EOS 5D Mk II with Canon EF 16-35mm f/2.8L II USM lens.
Exposure: 2.5 seconds at f/8 (ISO 100). Filter: 0.6ND hard grad.



Mimi

by Lukas Wawrzinek

500px.com/LukasWawrzinek

(Above) "I was shooting on a sunny day and liked the idea of using the fence's shadows and the bokeh as a lead in. A breeze added some motion to the model's hair. I shot this using an adapted Canon 50mm f/0.95 TV lens."

Sony Alpha 7R with Canon TV 50mm f/0.95 lens.
Exposure: 1/3200sec at f/0.95 (ISO 100).

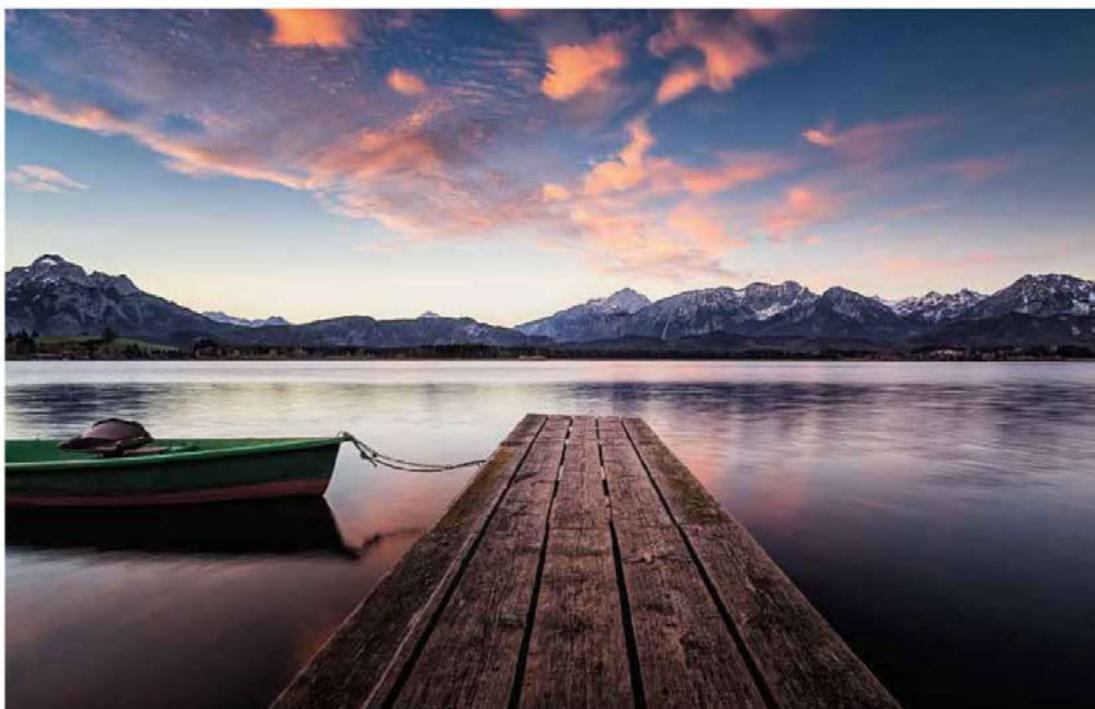
Not Close Enough

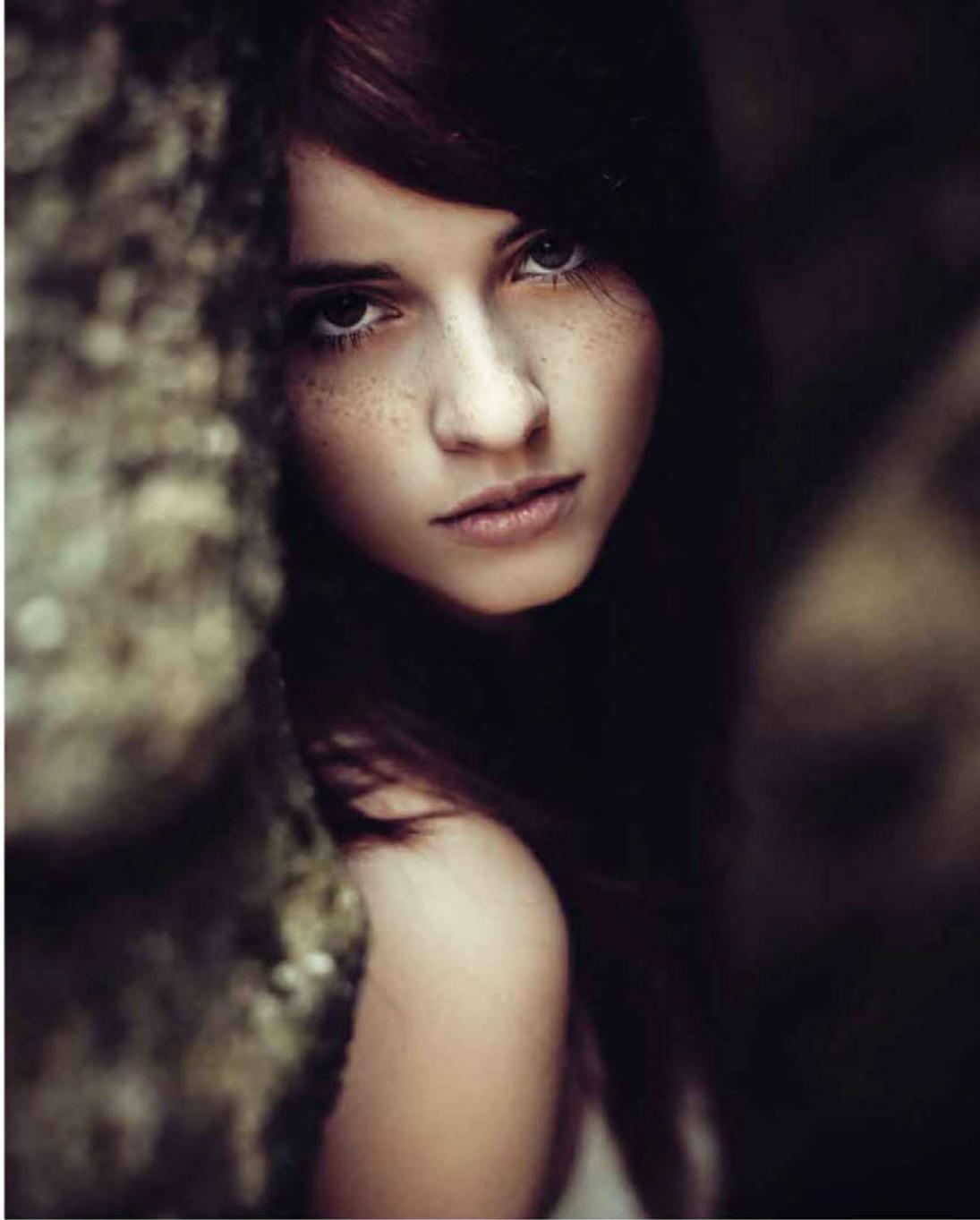
by Daniel Vogelbacher

www.chaospixel.com

(Right) "During the last days of autumn, I travelled to the town of Hohenschwangau in Germany. There are many impressive lakes surrounding the town with views of the Bavarian Alps. I used a polariser to add contrast to the sky."

Canon EOS 5D Mk III with EF17-40mm f/4L USM lens.
Exposure: Two seconds at f/16 (ISO 160).





Caro

by Lukas Wawrzinek

(Above right) "Taken in the Harz mountains of Germany. I noticed some incredibly soft light in a natural rock gangway, so asked the model to rest her head on the rock and tilt her face up towards the light. I adjusted the colours using Curves and Color Balance in Photoshop."

Mamiya 645 AFD II with adapted 105mm f/2.4 lens.
Exposure: 1/90sec at f/2.4 (ISO 100).

Winter Forest Sunrise

by Daniel Vogelbacher

(Right) "During a pre-dawn trip to the northern Black Forest in Germany I was initially greeted by thick fog. Thankfully, as the sun rose I was rewarded with the most fantastic colours and snowy landscape.

The Nik Filter Collection was used to enhance the image in processing."

Canon EOS 5D Mk III with EF17-40mm f/4L USM lens.
Exposure: 1/60sec at f/13 (ISO 100).



Portfolio





Ice Implosion by Roberto Sysa Moiola

www.sysaworld.com

(Above) "This was one of the most intense sunrises I have ever seen. Just a couple of days earlier, the ice in the foreground was a beautiful pool, perfect for reflections, but the winter transformed the landscape. I couldn't resist capturing this shot." Canon EOS 5D Mk III with Canon EF 16-35mm f/2.8L II USM. Exposure: Six seconds at f/13 (ISO 100).

Zermatt Matterhorn by Roberto Sysa Moiola

(Right) "I was in Zermatt taking pictures for the Matterhorn 150th-year jubilee. Blue hour is the best time to shoot urban scenes, but ND grads are a must to balance the sky with the town. The contrasting tones work well together in this scene." Canon EOS 5D Mk III with Canon EF 16-35mm f/2.8L II USM. Exposure: 30 seconds at f/8 (ISO 320).

Frankfurt – Tower 185 by Markus Pfeffer

www.pfeffer-photo.com

(Far left) "Like most of my architectural images, this was shot as a long exposure using filtration to achieve the streaks of moving cloud. This motion nicely contrasts with the hard lines and sharp edges of the inert architecture underneath."

Fuji X-E1 with Fuji XF 14mm f/2.8 lens. Exposure: 110 seconds at f/11 (ISO 200). Filters: 3ND & 0.9ND.

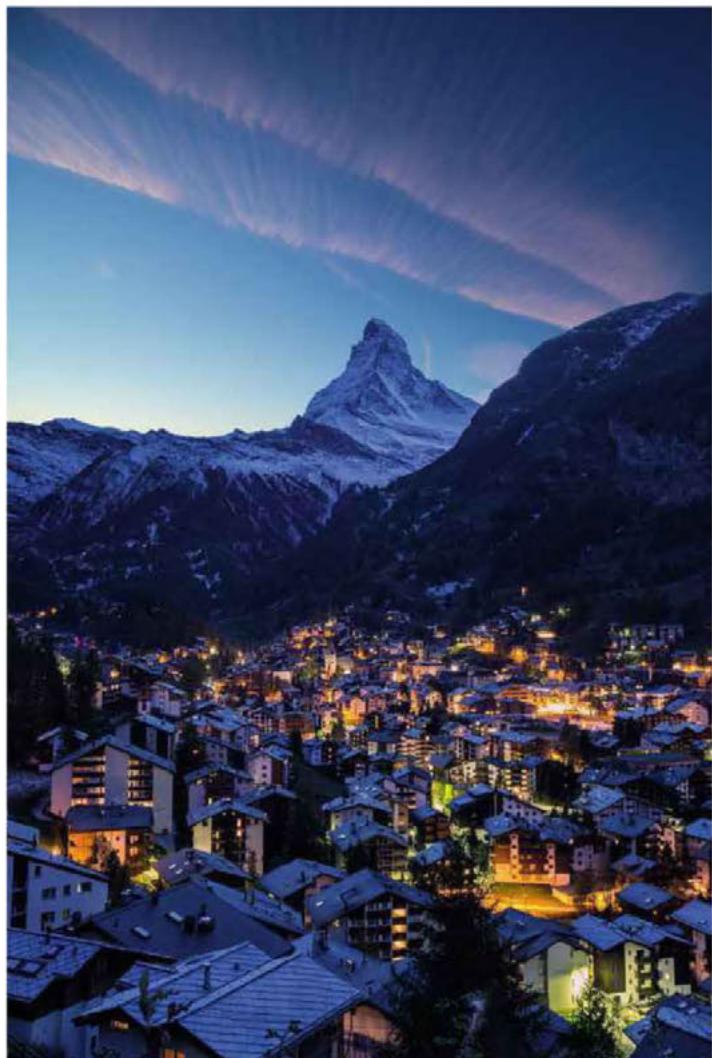
Zeelandbrug by Markus Pfeffer

(Top left) "When I visited Zeeland in the Netherlands, I couldn't resist photographing this very popular subject. I was very lucky to have just the right ratio between sky and moving clouds that day to create contrast and give the long exposure the desired effect." Fuji X-E1 with Fuji XF 10-24mm f/4 lens. Exposure: 140 seconds at f/6.4 (ISO 200). Filters: ND3 & ND1.8.

Düsseldorf by Markus Pfeffer

(Left) "When processing images, such as this one of the DOCK Tower in Düsseldorf, I start by making individual selections of all the elements in the image in Photoshop. It's time-consuming, but is the key to working selectively."

Fuji X-E1 with Fuji XF 14mm f/2.8 lens. Exposure: 75 seconds at f/11 (ISO 200). Filters: 3ND & 0.9ND.

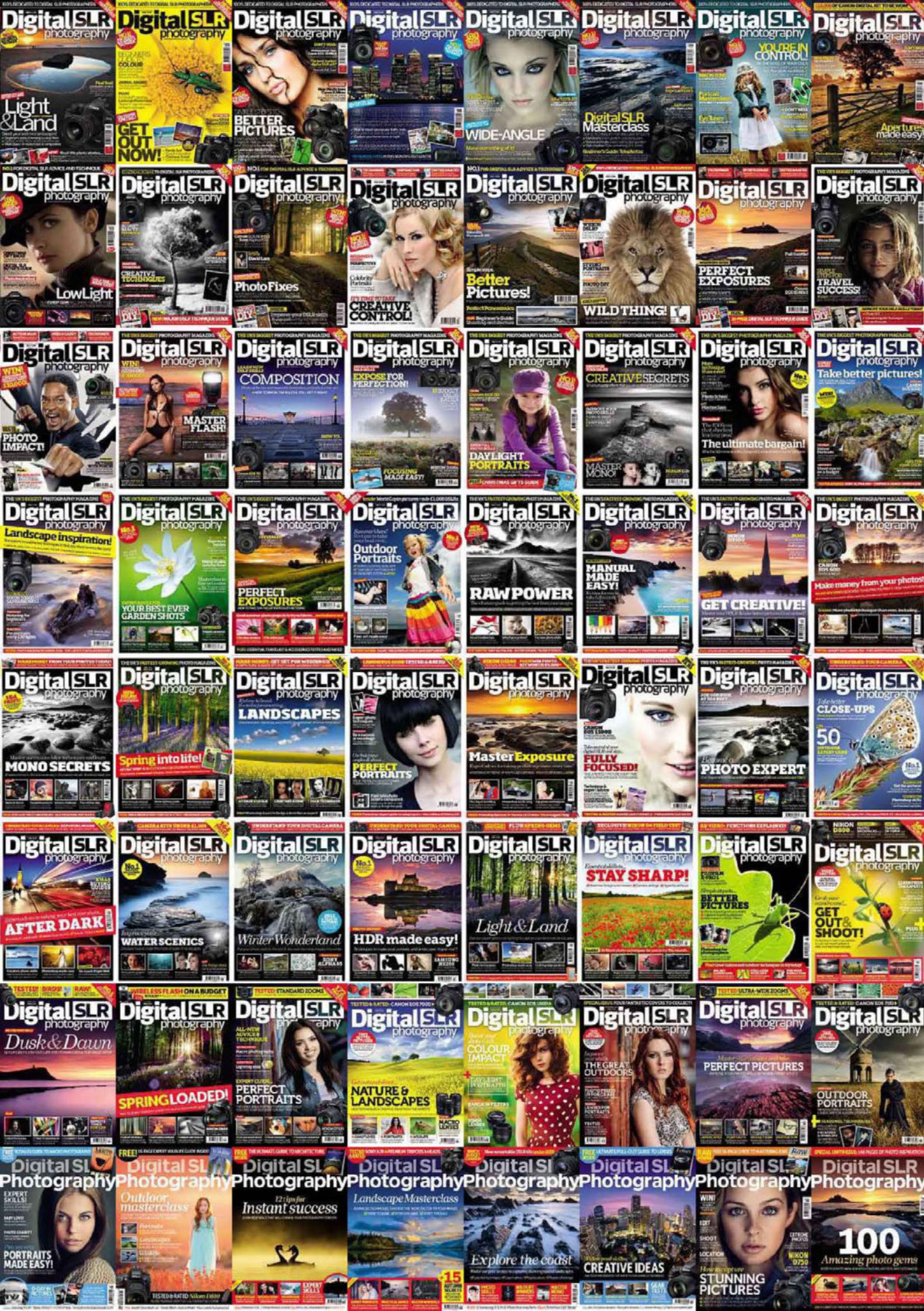




100 & COUNTING...

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE, BUT *DIGITAL SLR PHOTOGRAPHY* HAS REACHED ITS 100TH ISSUE. SOME OF YOU MAY HAVE BEEN WITH US FROM THE START, OTHERS MAY HAVE JOINED THE FAMILY MORE RECENTLY. WE TAKE A LOOK BACK AT OVER EIGHTYEARS OF PHOTO INSPIRATION





100th Issue Special

QUESTION: WHAT WERE YOU doing in November 2006? Not sure? No such problem here – we can still fondly remember putting the finishing touches to the first issue of *Digital SLR Photography*. Since those long distant days, the magazine has evolved several times, been taken over by one of the UK's most successful publishers and most recently changed its masthead.

Despite all these – and many other – changes, the magazine has stayed true to its original ethos: to deliver a unique mix of advice, inspiration and information for photographers dedicated to taking great images. Over the years we've taken heart from your praise, paid attention to your criticisms and worked tirelessly to bring you the best possible magazine. Reaching 100 issues in such a competitive market where similar titles have come and gone is thanks to the contributions of the photographers that support our magazine and the feedback we receive from our readers. We hope you enjoy this brief retrospective of our first 100 issues.



100 ISSUES ON, THOUGHTS FROM THE TEAM...



DANIEL, EDITOR:

As an enthusiast photographer for many years, it's a real privilege to be involved in an aspirational photo magazine.

Cherished moments: Getting to speak to and meet photographers I've admired for years and becoming friends with many of them.

Moment to forget:

Ripping the rear of three pairs of jeans in three weeks to the delight (thrice!) of everyone in the office (see over the page).

Most inspired by: Wow! So much to choose from. I'd have to say that Nick Brandt's amazing black & white wildlife images are hard to top. But then again...

FACT!

Overtwo and a half million copies of *Digital SLR Photography* magazine have been bought around the world since we launched in 2006!



Superheroes, February 2012



Working lunch, July 2013



CAROLINE, DEPUTY EDITOR:

Editing *Digital SLR Photography* magazine is not just a job, it's a lifestyle that's consistently creative and inspiring.

Cherished moments: From visiting unforgettable places to learning from incredible people – there are so many.

Moment to forget: Building a spotlight out of household junk in the studio. A word of warning: studio flashes get hot really quickly!

Most inspired by: The work of Frank Okenfels, Joey L and Martin Schoeller have me reaching for my camera.

2006

Digital SLR Photography is launched. Nikon announces it will stop production of all of its film cameras, except for the Nikon FM10 and F6, following Kodak in 2004. Canon expands its digital SLR range with the EOS 400D, the first EOS with an integrated cleaning system to reduce and repel dust from the image sensor.

2007

Digital SLR technology develops in leaps and bounds from initial launch, with the number of AF points, frames-per-second shooting rate and LCD screen size increasing as well as a race for the most megapixels. The most marked launches were Nikon's APS-C flagship D300 and Canon's professional full-frame model, the EOS-1D Mk III.

2008

The Micro Four-Thirds system is announced by Olympus and Panasonic; the first DSLRs with HD video are launched (Nikon D90 and Canon EOS 5D Mk II) and the phrase 'iPhoneography' is coined as the smartphone trend picks up popularity. Halo Publishing, which produces *Digital SLR Photography*, is acquired by Dennis Publishing.

2009

The Ricoh GX-R is launched featuring interchangeable lens units, each with their own sensors. It's a system that didn't have the commercial success that it deserves. *Digital SLR Photography* wins the Pixel Magazine of the Year award and releases a major revamp of its website: www.digitalsrphoto.com.

2010

Digital SLR Photography becomes the UK's fastest-selling photography magazine and is also launched in Malaysia. Sony unveils the NEX-5, the world's first APS-C mirrorless camera. The world discovers Instagram and social networking gathers pace. The Apple iPhone 4 with its front-facing camera kick-starts the 'selfie' craze.

FACT!

How many hours of editorial work do you think have gone into creating 100 issues? We estimate it's around 17,136 per person – you could walk around the equator twice in the same amount of time!



Ghost hunting, November 2010

**JORDAN, SENIOR WRITER:**

If you do what you love, you'll never work another day in your life. I feel fortunate to work on such an inspirational title.

Cherished moment: Too many to mention. Getting to shoot alongside and learn from the industry's best is a constant highlight.

Moment to forget: Calling in sick on my second day on the magazine after breaking my arm snowboarding the night before.

Most inspired by: The portrait work of Dan Winters. His use of light and shadow oozes style, creating captivating portraits.

**LUKE, ART, EDITOR:**

Working on a photography magazine and having the chance to work with so many amazing images is fantastic.

Cherished moments: Without doubt it's the night we spent at a haunted theatre. I saw and felt things that I still can't quite explain. I was happy to get out of there in one piece!

Moment to forget: I can't remember it!

Most inspired by: We feature an incredible array of talent in the magazine but Dave Hill, with his brilliant photography and post-production skills, continues to inspire me.

Contributors who began as readers...

If you ever need motivation to keep improving your photography and supplying your best images to *Digital SLR Photography*, then how's this for inspiration. Several of the magazine's contributors first supplied their images to the magazine as readers. Such was the quality of their work that one thing led to another and they were commissioned to produce articles for the magazine. All are now successful professionals too; proof that you can live the dream and make a success of your photography! Here's a small selection of our reader-turned-contributors...

**HELEN DIXON**

In our August 2009 issue, we interviewed Helen, who had previously supplied us some amazing landscape images (her first appearance was in *Reader Showcase*, April 2007). She worked for the Royal Mail in Richmond, Surrey, and spoke of living the dream and moving to Cornwall to shoot landscapes. Guess what? Helen is now a full-time professional photographer living in Cornwall shooting stunning landscape images, such as the one used on this month's cover!

www.helendixonphotography.com

**PAUL WARD**

We first featured Paul in *Reader Showcase* back in our May 2007 issue. Now a highly-successful portrait and fashion photographer, Paul regularly shoots tutorials for the magazine, such as the low-key portrait guide on page 41.

www.paulwardphotography.com

**MARK BAUER**

When Mark first sent us his images for *Reader Showcase*, we knew we had to get him working on the magazine. He has since written several tutorials on shooting landscapes. Mark is also a successful professional photographer and co-runs Dawn2Dusk photo workshops (www.dawn2duskphotography.co.uk) with two other contributors, Ross Hoddinott and Adam Burton.

www.markbauerphtography.com

Unfortunately space doesn't allow us to include our other reader-turned-contributors, such as John Patrick, Gary McParland and Ross Armstrong, but we'd like to extend our thanks to all of our readers who have helped with articles that are behind the magazine's success.

2011

Digital SLR Photography becomes available digitally for Android and Apple devices. Nikon jumps into the growing CSC market with the launch of its Nikon 1 system and releases its 60 millionth lens, while Canon celebrates production of its 60 millionth EF lens and the Apple iPhone 4s launches with its eight-megapixel camera.

2012

The Canon EOS 6D, the first DSLR with built-in WiFi and GPS, is launched. Nikon launches the 36.3-megapixel D800E, the first DSLR without an anti-aliasing filter for sharper images. Kodak stop making cameras after 110 years – its first digital camera launched in 1975 was the size of a toaster and produced 0.01-megapixel black & white images.

2013

'Selfie' makes it to the dictionary, Nokia release the 41-megapixel Lumia 1020 smartphone and the last roll of Kodak Kodachrome was developed. Sony squeezes a full-frame sensor into a compact body with the 36.3-megapixel A7R mirrorless camera. Our September issue is produced with four different cover images.

2014

Digital SLR Photography becomes the UK's most followed photography magazine on social media, with 500,000+ followers collectively. If you haven't already, why not become part of the community at www.facebook.com/digitalslrphoto. The magazine is released in its sixth language and receives an all new masthead and design.

2015

Digital SLR Photography magazine prints its 100th issue. More of the same great quality, information and inspiration. Pick up issue 101 to discover some great new articles and series that offer ways to improve your photography. Join us on Facebook and Twitter where you can interact with the team and apply to appear in our articles!

A FEW WORDS FROM OUR REGULAR CONTRIBUTORS...



Ross Hoddinott

I feel proud to have contributed to each and every issue. The editorial team is the nicest, most creative bunch around – obviously I have to say that, right?! All joking aside, it is a genuine pleasure to be a regular contributor. It has been fascinating being involved with the magazine from day one and watching it evolve into one of the UK's leading photo titles. The team has got me to shoot some bizarre things over the years. For example, I once had to snap a frozen fish – not a great subject for a vegetarian! Some of my favourite images were taken while producing articles, including one of Colmer's Hill in the mist that was subsequently Commended in the International Garden Photographer of the Year competition. I've personally learnt so much from reading the mag, and each issue fills me with renewed enthusiasm.



Brett Harkness

It's been a great pleasure being a part of the 100 issues in what is without a doubt one of the best photo titles in the UK. And I'm not getting paid to say that! From bespoke shoots, reader days to features such as India street documentary, I like to think I've given the magazine a little bit of everything. My favourite shot used in the past has to be a portrait of a coal worker in India. This shot epitomises what I'm about as a photographer and it was a joy to see it used across a double-page spread. Not only is the magazine a pleasure to shoot for, but it's also a great read to discover great talent. I was published in the same issue as Canadian photographer Joey L, thus that was how I came across his work myself and he has inspired me as a photographer ever since. If you want a read that doesn't follow the rules but creates them, then look no further.



BIG-NAME INTERVIEWS...

Over 100 issues, we've interviewed some of the biggest names in photography. In no particular order, we've listed some of the highlights: Steve McCurry, Clive Arrowsmith, Annie Leibovitz, Joey L, Terry O'Neill, Tim Walker, Jill Greenberg, Rankin, Joe Cornish, Andrew MacPherson, David Noton, Dan Winters, Nick Brandt, Tim Flach, John Wright, Timothy Allen and, most recently, Vincent Laforet as well as many more.



Lee Frost

It took me a long time to take the plunge and switch from film to digital capture, but being given the opportunity to write for *Digital SLR Photography* was one of the defining factors that forced my hand. That was 2008. Since then I've penned over 200 articles for editor Lezano (more than half a million words) and I'm still going strong. Digital technology opened up so many creative doors for me photographically. I began to experiment more than ever before and this gave me a constant source of new material for my writing. I was one of the first photographers in the UK to embrace the use of ten-stop ND filters, for example, and wrote my first article on that subject in 2008. Having an editorial team that's open to new ideas and being given unusual briefs makes a big difference and my collaboration with *Digital SLR Photography* has definitely made me a better photographer.



ENTHUSIAST DIGITAL SLRS: THEN & NOW...

It's amazing how far enthusiast-level DSLRs have developed over the last 100 issues...

Average resolution in megapixels:

2006: 8.2- to 10.2-megapixels

2015: 20.2- to 24.3-megapixels

Number of AF Points

2006: Three to nine AF points

2015: 51 to 65 points

SD memory cards:

2006: 128MB (£12) to 2GB (£87)

2015: 4GB (£7) to 512GB (£550)

ISO range

2006: 1600 to 3200 (The ISO range for the Olympus E-500 at the time was 100-400!)

2015: 12,800 -16,000 (expandable to ISO 25,600)

HD Video

2006: N/A

2008: 720p

2015: 1080p

(Figures based on enthusiast models. Entry-level and semi-pro/pro spec cameras would have a lower or higher specifications.)



Helen Dixon

It's hard to believe it's the 100th issue! When I had my first image published in 2007, I would never have dreamt that I would still have the privilege of being involved in what I consider to be the finest photography magazine out there. It's been a fantastic journey, a journey that I owe so much thanks to the editorial team, for helping me make a career from my photography. Choosing my favourite featured image is a shot that I can only describe as a moment that I would never forget. The light lasted just minutes and was some of the best I'd ever seen even to this day. As for my favourite article? Well it's such a difficult choice, as each one is as special to me as the first. It's always an honour to be featured. If I had to pick just one, it would probably be *Living The Dream* (August 2009), which covered the start of my professional photography career.



Behind the scenes....

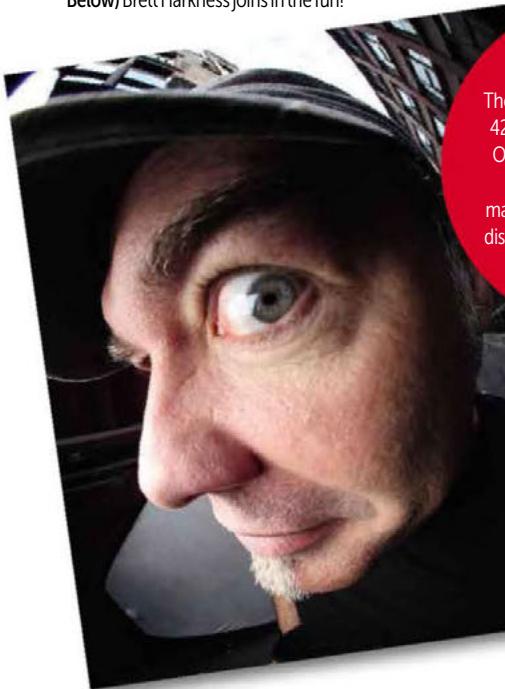
Not always, but on some days, things can turn a little silly. Here's a few shots from our working days and photo shoots that never made it in the magazine for obvious reasons...

Above) Racking comes to good use when working late.
Right) Horsing around in the office and on photo shoots.
Below) Brett Harkness joins in the fun!



FACT!

The team have consumed around 42,000 cups of tea since launch. Of these, Jordan has only made two rounds, while the vast majority that Caroline made were discreetly poured out the window while she wasn't looking!



AND FINALLY: WHEN THINGS GO HORRIBLY, HORRIBLY WRONG...

We'll end our retrospective of 100 issues by illustrating the dangers of working on a photo magazine. Thankfully, no editors were harmed in the making of these images...

Right) The rip from Lezano's jeans could be heard for miles.
Below) Jordan Butters is on hand to shoot ed Lezano fall as he tries to climb over a fence while carrying a box filled with kit.



SIX THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT EVERY ISSUE

- 1** We include one teeny, but deliberate mistake in every issue.
- 2** Every issue has a secret message hidden somewhere. Here's a clue: It's in the first few pages.
- 3** The combined age of the five editorial team members is 194 and they have over 78 experience working in publishing!
- 4** We're the longest-running magazine dedicated to digital SLR photography.
- 5** The word arsenal appears in every issue – can you find it?
- 6** We always add one fib into lists like these, honest.





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YOU CAN JOIN IN ON OUR 100TH ISSUE CELEBRATIONS BY ENTERING THIS COMPETITION FOR A CHANCE TO WIN THIS HIGHLY DESIRABLE CAMERA



WE'D LIKE TO thank Fujifilm for providing the best possible prize to fit in with our 100th issue. One lucky reader will have extra reason to celebrate as we have a brilliant Fujifilm X100T premium X-series compact camera to give away.

The X100T is the third generation of the highly popular X100 series and boasts an extensive range of features that makes it a highly capable picture-taking tool that is as suitable in the hands of professionals as it is with enthusiast photographers.

At the heart of the Fujifilm X100T is the X-Trans CMOS II sensor. This APS-C-sized 16.3-megapixel image sensor is coupled with the excellent EXR Processor II to produce extremely high image quality, with an ISO range of 100-51200.

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The X100T is packed with innovative features, from its extensive range of film simulation modes to its eight creative filters, but arguably its best is the Advanced Hybrid Viewfinder. It combines the best of a traditional optical viewfinder and electronic finder, allowing for a bright, clear display with the added benefit of electronic aids. Should you prefer to shoot using LiveView, you'll find the 3in 1,040,000-dot LCD monitor a pleasure to use.

All this cutting-edge technology is packed into an incredibly stylish retro design. Not only does the X100T look great, but it also handles beautifully and is very easy to use. But you don't just have to take our word for it, enter our competition and you have the chance to find out for yourself. All you need to do is answer our simple question before the closing date of Monday 16 March 2015. For further details on the Fujifilm X100T and other models in Fujifilm's X-series, visit: www.fujifilm.co.uk



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HOW TO ENTER

For your chance of winning a Fujifilm X100T worth £1,000, answer this simple question:

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Email your answer, name & address to dslrphotocompetitions@dennis.co.uk using the subject 'Fiji X100T!' by Monday 16 March 2015. We'll pick the winner at random and they will receive confirmation within seven days. For full terms and conditions, visit www.digitalslrphoto.com. Open to UK readers only.

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The Location Guide

The Northern Dales

The Yorkshire Dales offer a landscape rich in waterfalls, limestone pavements and glacial valleys teeming with dry stone walls and barns. The northern dales of Wensleydale & Swaledale make a great base from which to explore further

LOCATION: THE YORKSHIRE DALES, YORKSHIRE / OS REF: SD9763698304 (OS EXPLORER OL30)



The Northern Dales

For that exhilarating feeling of 'getting away from it all', it is hard to beat the Yorkshire Dales as a destination. The area is rich in stone-walled pastures and barns, perhaps the most iconic features of the Yorkshire Dales. In the summer months, the meadows are transformed into a vista of vibrant colour as wild buttercups add a splash of bright yellow to the lush green pastures. Venture a few yards from the roadside and you will find some of the prettiest waterfalls anywhere in England. It really is not hard to see why the area is popular for families, walkers and photographers alike.

A good starting point for any visit to this part of the Dales has to be the stunning waterfall at West Burton. Parking is easy in the village and there are a few spaces by the falls themselves. Only a mile or so away from the famous triple falls at Aysgarth, these falls are more accessible, offering countless compositional opportunities. Wide-angle lenses will capture the falls within their surroundings – look to use overhanging branches, stone ledges and the flow of the water when choosing your composition. Longer lenses will allow you to isolate parts of the fall, making the water the focal point of the final image. The little stream that runs from the waterfall is shallow and a pair of Wellington boots will bring rewards for those looking for unusual compositions. There is a beautiful footbridge a hundred yards or so away from the falls, too, which leads to the opposite side of the waterfall and again offers lots of potential.

From West Burton take the A684 west, heading for the lively market town of Hawes. Hawes is an unspoilt gem and welcomes tourism but not at the expense of its identity. Tradition is very much the keyword here, as it is across the whole of the Dales. There is a good choice of places to stay and for the evenings there are a wide variety of places to eat and drink with several pubs and cafes. To help get you through the day there are a couple of cafes and a decent range of shops. Though Hawes will no doubt charm you, it is out in the surrounding countryside that you will find the region's photographic gems.

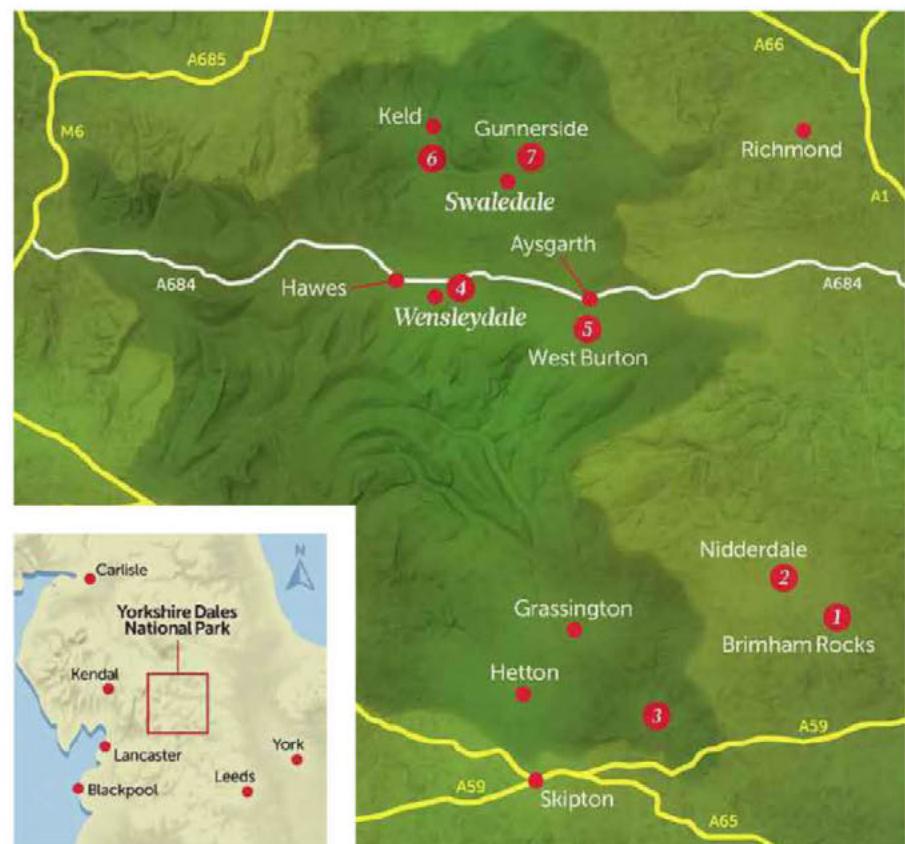
A mile or so back on the main Leyburn road you will come to a sign for Burtersett. Park up here (by the main road), walk up the lane a hundred yards or so and take the footpath to the left into the fields. The path leads through meadows and narrow gates in the dry stone walls and you will soon get your first close-up view of the barns themselves. A good time to visit is in

1 BRIMHAM ROCKS: Zoom in on subjects to dramatically change their importance within a scene.

2 NIDDERDALE: The glacial valleys of the Dales can look spectacular in any weather, but especially under moody skies.

3 THE STRID, BOLTON ABBEY: Look to use the surrounding rocks in your compositions when shooting this narrow gorge.

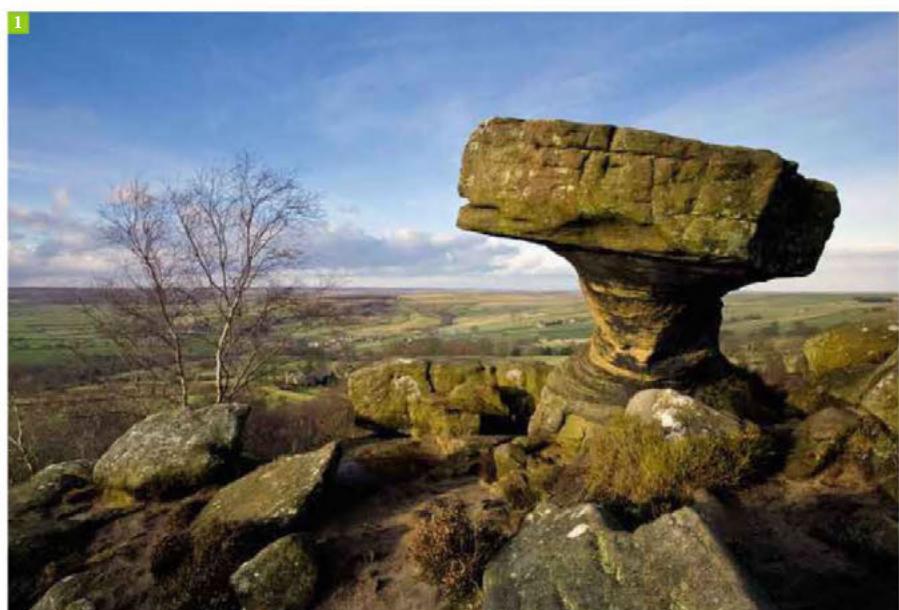
4 WENSLEYDALE: On moody days it is worth waiting around for the sun, transforming an ordinary image into a great one.

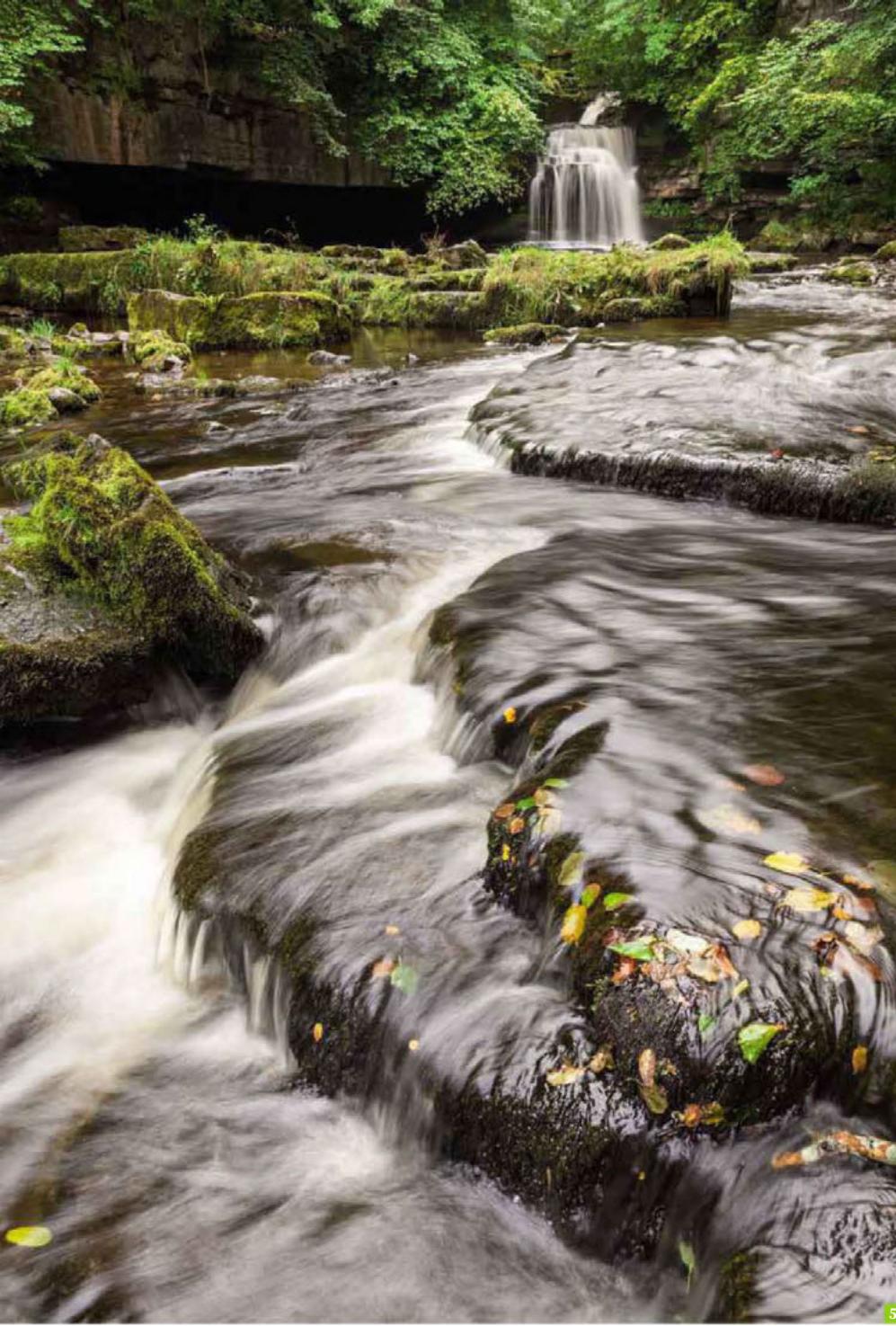


Chris Ceaser "Why I love the northern dales"



"I have lived all of my life in Yorkshire. Wensleydale and Swaledale have long been favourite haunts that are full of photographic opportunity. Totally unspoilt, the region is steeped in tradition and history and it remains, visually at least, as it was hundreds of years ago. The villages and small towns have kept their proud sense of identity and the drystone-walled pastures quickly make you feel 'away from it all'. The rivers are young and shallow in the Dales and they meander from village to village, via the odd waterfall and through meadows filled with colourful wildflowers in the summer months. The barns that are so prolific in the region play a big part in the identity of the Dales and it is these, together with the walls, waterfalls and valleys, that offer a plethora of opportunity for the photographers."





ALL IMAGES: CHRIS CEASER

Useful Information

Where is it? Swaledale & Wensleydale are in the northern part of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The nearest larger towns are Hawes and Leyburn, both with a good selection of places to stay and eat.

Getting there:

By Road: From the north leave the A1 at Scotch Corner and take the A6108 to Richmond and then onto Leyburn. From the south leave the A1 at Leeming and then take the A684 to Bedale and then onto Leyburn. From the west join the A683 before either Sedbergh or Kirkby Lonsdale and then head for Hawes on the A684.

Places to eat and sleep:

There are plenty of B&Bs and guest houses in the area. Search for accommodation in Hawes or Aysgarth for Wensleydale, or for Swaledale look for accommodation at Muker, Keld or Gunnerside. The distance from the northern dales are as follows: From Hawes – Ribblehead (11 miles), Aysgarth (eight miles), Kettlewell (17 miles); From Muker – Ribblehead (18 miles) Aysgarth (14 miles), Kettlewell (22 miles).

For further information:

Check out the National Park website at: www.yorkshiredales.org.uk for information on accommodation etc and other places of interest to visit.

Weather forecast:

www.metoffice.gov.uk
(nearest forecast Leyburn).

5) WEST BURTON FALLS: Look for elements that act as lead-in lines, or add foreground interest, like these cascading steps.

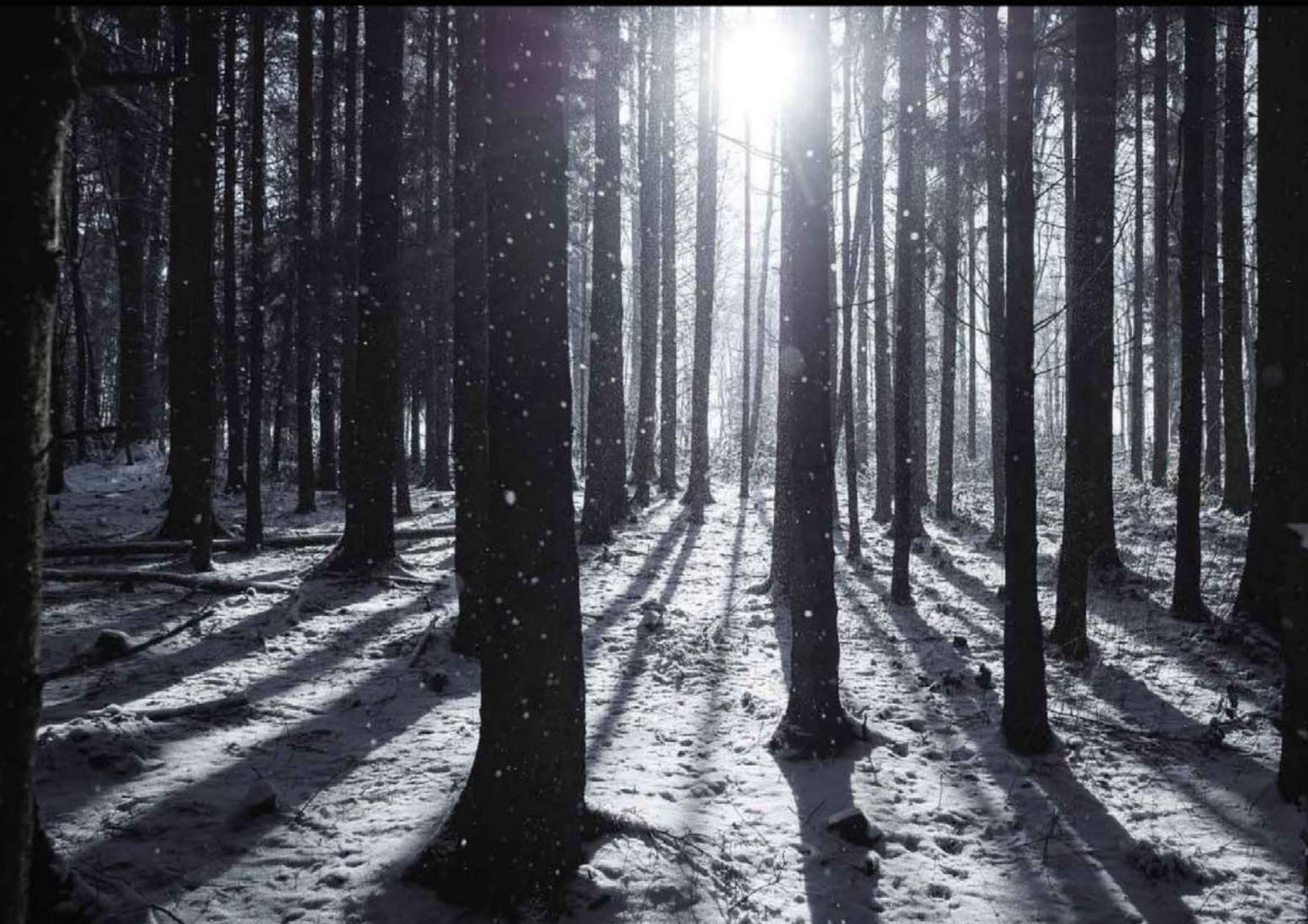
6) SWALEDALE: To record the Dales when the wild flowers are out, try early June when the buttercups can be prolific.



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M.Zuiko 12mm 1:2.0 Digital ED. Image courtesy of Andreas Voegeli.

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The Northern Dales

June is when the summer buttercups are in flower and shouldn't be missed. They have a magical effect on the landscape, offering stark contrasts when the sky is overcast or stormy. Use your telephoto lenses for close-up images of the flowers and use your wide-angle lenses to include the barns, their surroundings and how they interact with the landscape. Try taking the same shot twice but changing the focus point for vastly different results. For instance, maybe try to shoot one image with the focus on the nearby flowers at a narrow aperture for maximum depth-of-field to bring the barn into detail, then switch the focus onto the barn and use a wider aperture to create a hazy, yellow blur as a foreground.

Heading back on the A684 towards Hawes look for the sign towards Hardraw and Muker. Follow the signs for Muker and enjoy the ride up Buttertubs pass. The top offers stunning scenery so make sure you stop and check out the options from here. The Buttertubs are 20-feet deep limestone potholes where farmers used to lower the butter they had produced to keep it cool.

As you drop down into Muker take the Keld road. After passing through the hamlet of Thwaite look for a parking space on the left opposite the dry stone wall some 800 metres from the hamlet. The view back down the valley from here is superb. There are a couple of barns that you can use in your compositions and images can be created with any lens. Try zooming in on a section of barn for a close-up look to this wonderful landscape. Wide-angle lenses will let you shoot the whole valley and it is worth a visit at any time of year. If the weather isn't playing ball, try converting your images to monochrome, but remember your ND grad filters to control those big skies.



CHRIS CEASER

7) GUNNERSIDE: Wide-angle lenses can really make the most of dramatic sky conditions. Don't be afraid to include lots of sky in the frame when it is full of interest.

From here head down into Muker and follow the road for a few miles until you reach the village of Gunnerside. Go through the village on the Reeth Road and park up near the last barn on the right. Aim to arrive a good 90 minutes before sunset to make the most of the late golden light that floods across the landscape. There's a 200-metre stretch of roadside that offers a wide variety of compositions from your elevated position. From here, you can also gain access into the valley itself. Look to use the barns to create patterns in the landscape, maybe zooming in for a tighter crop, or pulling back to use that big colourful sky to dominate the composition. A good wide-angle lens (10mm on crop sensors or 16mm on full-frame) will reap rewards here.

Start shooting!

Things to shoot: Dry stone wall patterns in the valleys in early/late light, wild valley flowers in May, June & July, the iconic barns at all times of the day, streams & rivers across Wensleydale, Wharfedale and Malhamdale, waterfalls at West Burton, Aysgarth, Hardraw & Gordale, Malham Tarn at both ends of the day.

Recommended kit: Wide-angle lenses, tide timetable, ND grads, tripod, remote release and wellies.

When to go: Any time of year! Spring for wild flowers by the streams, buttercups in June. October/November is good for waterfalls. Walls and barns look great in all weather.



Keep shooting! Other great locations near The Northern Dales



CHRIS CEASER

1) RIBBLEHEAD VIADUCT

This famous old viaduct lies in the Ribble Valley. Wide-angle lenses are the order of the day if shooting the whole viaduct. Steam engines still run here, so check first before visiting. The area around the viaduct offers great views towards the peaks of Ingleborough and Whernside.



CHRIS CEASER

2) AYSGARTH FALLS, WENSLEYDALE

Nestled between Leyburn and Hawes, the falls at Aysgarth command lots of attention. Park up at the National Park car park and follow the river upstream to the Higher Falls or downstream to find the powerful Middle Falls and the sweeping Lower Falls. It's easy to spend time here.



CHRIS CEASER

3) KETTLEWELL, WHARFEDALE

Kettlewell lies approximately 16 miles from Hawes, heading south. From the village centre there is easy access up the side of the valleys and the resulting views are simply stunning. Late afternoon is a good time to visit as the softer light of the sun will create a glow on the landscape beneath.

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PHOTO SKILLS

IDEAS & ADVICE FOR BETTER PHOTOS



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PHOTO
SKILLS

CAPTURE DRAMATIC Lighthouse SHOTS

ROSS HODDINOTT EXPLORES THE OPTIONS YOU HAVE FOR PHOTOGRAPHING THE UK'S COASTAL JEWELS

CAMERA: NIKON D810 | **LENS:** NIKKOR AF-S 24-70MM F/2.8G ED





WHEN YOU LIVE on an island with miles of rugged coastline, you will be never be too far away from a lighthouse or two – great news for landscape photographers. Few buildings have as much interest, romance or picture potential. They vary hugely in design, size and character but are usually found within dramatic coastal scenes, making ideal focal points. Not all lighthouses work well in photographs, though, so before you rush to the coast, do your research. Start at www.trinityhouse.co.uk: the site provides a map of the UK's operational lighthouses, together with visitor information, which gives you an idea of your closest options. Trusty Google should be your next stop – use the Image search to filter out the less attractive lighthouses from the photogenic ones. Once you've narrowed down your location, use a sun compass or mobile app to calculate the sun's position to ensure you'll work within the best light.

While lighthouses work well in frame-filling close-up (particularly white lighthouses against a deep blue, polarised sky), they often create more compelling images as a focal point within a wider landscape. Shooting a wider view means you can capture its wild environment: in stormy weather, for instance, you might be able to capture large waves crashing against the cliffs. Timing is key for this type of image, so be prepared to take a large sequence of shots to capture just the right wave and motion. A fast shutter speed is important, too, so prioritise a wider aperture and high ISO to generate at least 1/500sec. Alternatively, you could attach an ND filter to generate an artificially slow exposure for a sea of ethereal blur.

In low light, which is often the best time to capture longer exposures, shutter speeds will be naturally slow without the aid of filtration. As it gets darker, and the lighthouse turns on, you can capture very evocative images, but be careful that the highlights don't burn out. You can get around this by placing a piece of black card momentarily in front of the lens as the beam sweeps through your shot.



3 USING FILTRATION When photographing lighthouses, take care when using ND filters. Lighthouses often poke above the skyline, so if you use a hard-edged grad, you may find you darken the lighthouse as well as the sky. If this is very noticeable, it will look artificial. I decided to opt for a soft-edged ND grad, more specifically a 0.6 (two stop) version was best suited to the scene.



PRO TIP

A sturdy tripod is a must have accessory – lighthouses are often situated in exposed, remote spots where wind can be an issue. Sea spray can also cause problems, so keep a clean lens cloth in your pocket.



1 DO YOUR RESEARCH A web search will give you ideas of where to visit but will also give you a few clues regarding angles and popular viewpoints. While you won't necessarily want to copy these, studying images of a location can prove helpful. In this instance, I simply searched for north Cornwall – Trevose lighthouse looked the best, closest option.



2 ARRIVE IN TIME I got to the location an hour before sunset to give me time to locate the best viewpoints. The waves were crashing against the cliffs, so I thought I'd try to capture this in my photos. I increased the ISO to 1600 to give a shutter of 1/500sec. When reviewing the results, I noticed the sky was a little overexposed and to overcome this, I would need to use an ND grad filter.



4 ADAPT TO THE CONDITIONS To get the results that I wanted, the waves had to be bigger to be impressive, so I decided to change tact and opt for a slow shutter. I reverted back to ISO 64 and attached a Lee Filters Little Stopper, which absorbs six stops of light. The resulting exposure length was 30 seconds at f/11, which created a far more creative and interesting result.

10 POPULAR UK LIGHTHOUSES

- 1) Godrevy – Gwithian, Cornwall
- 2) Start Point – Dartmouth, Devon
- 3) La Corbiere – Jersey
- 4) Belle Tout – Eastbourne, Sussex
- 5) Portland Bill – Portland, Dorset
- 6) Neist Point – Skye, Scotland
- 7) Ardnamurchan – Acharacle, Scotland
- 8) St Mary's – Whitley Bay, Northumberland
- 9) Low lighthouse – Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset
- 10) Tŵr Mawr lighthouse – Anglesey, North Wales



LET THERE BE LIGHT!

For a different result, I switched to a vertical composition to make the most of the interesting clouds after sunset and the foreground rocks.

Exposure: 30 seconds at f/11 (ISO125)





PHOTOGRAPHING SWANS IN SILHOUETTE

PROFESSIONAL WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER BEN HALL EXPLAINS HIS TECHNIQUES AND SUGGESTS A FEW EXPERT TIPS FOR CAPTURING BEAUTIFUL PORTRAITS OF WINTER SWANS AGAINST GORGEOUS GOLDEN LIGHT

CAMERA: CANON EOS-1DX / LENS: CANON 500MM F/4L IS

WINTER IS MY favourite season for wildlife photography. With it comes frost, beautiful warm light and one of our most impressive natural spectacles – the arrival of wintering swans.

Two species of wild swan migrate to Britain for the winter – Whooper and Bewick's. These birds arrive from their breeding grounds in Siberia in mid-October. They spend the winter here in our comparatively warm climate, before departing again in March. They populate several large wetland centres across Britain, offering us the chance to get up close to these impressive wild birds. Our better-known Mute swans, however, are resident all year round and can often be found in parks, village ponds and lakes.

Because of their wonderfully graceful shape and form, swans look particularly photogenic in flight, especially when lit with a low, winter sun. At dusk, I nearly always opt for backlighting. Shooting into the light will infuse your images with colour, beauty and drama. For these magical qualities to be

apparent, the sun must be near to the horizon, so only attempt this very early or late in the day when contrast levels are low. Exposure can be tricky to calculate in these situations, so expose for the brightest areas of the image and check your histogram regularly to ensure you are not losing important highlight detail. If needed, use exposure compensation to find the best exposure in-camera.

When photographing portraits of swans, long lenses in the region of 300mm to 600mm offer several advantages over a standard zoom. A telephoto focal length has a narrow angle-of-view, making it much easier to isolate one bird from a mass. When coupled with a wide aperture, the foreground and background will become diffused, helping the subject to stand out and further eliminating distracting elements from the frame. Finally, look for those fleeting moments when the bird strikes an interesting pose. Often, just a slight tilt of the neck is all it takes to show a swan's graceful form.



1 PICK YOUR LOCATION Most large wetland centres have purpose-built hides, so you can shoot in relative comfort while still capturing natural behaviour. Adopt the lowest shooting angle possible if you're capturing birds on the water. Shooting at eye level adds intimacy and makes it easier to blur the background. You will need backlighting to create a successful silhouette so get into position before sunrise or sunset.



3 MASTER EXPOSURE Your metering system may have trouble with creating silhouettes, so you need to trick it by spot metering from the brightest part of the sky to establish the highlight as a mid-tone. Depending on how bright the sky is, you may need to increase this exposure by up to one stop using exposure compensation. It will get easier with experience, but use the histogram to help and watch out for clipped highlights.



2 APPLY CAMERA SETTINGS Use aperture-priority mode and set a wide aperture to access as much light as possible, help eliminate distractions and select the fastest possible shutter speed for your chosen ISO. Wildlife is unpredictable so set the drive to high-speed continuous shooting to allow you to fire a burst of images should interesting behaviour occur, greatly improving your chance of great shots.



4 TRY RIM LIGHTING It is not always necessary to shoot against the sky for a silhouette to work. Shooting into the light against a dark background can create a wonderful rim light effect. Expose for the highlights and use negative exposure compensation to let the shadow areas fall into black so only the halo of light around your subject is visible. This is a great way of reducing an image to its most simple form.



THAT'S SWAN FOR THE ALBUM!
Once the sky is full of colour and the birds are airborne, turn to the sky and dial in a shutter speed that's reciprocal to your focal length. For instance, if shooting with at 500mm, dial in a shutter speed of 1/500sec to freeze the moving birds.

Exposure: 1/400sec at f/5.6 (ISO 500)

ESSENTIAL KIT

Use a telephoto lens with your camera. Lenses in the region of 300–600mm are ideal, but often expensive – why not look at hiring a lens or consider the Tamron 150–600mm f/5–6.3 as a versatile option. Teleconverters can be useful but be aware of the loss of light. A beanbag offers a stable support, and excellent freedom of movement, especially when shooting from a hide. Fast memory cards are a big advantage when photographing birds as they will allow a greater number of images to be taken in succession.





PHOTOGRAPHING SWANS: OTHER IDEAS TO TRY...



1) CAPTURE DETAIL IN BRIGHT SCENES

If you want to avoid a silhouette when shooting airborne birds against a bright sky, you'll need to add positive exposure compensation. Use the histogram – it should be weighted to the right, without breaking the confines of the graph. This ensures clean whites with plenty of detail – perfect for high-key images.



2) RECORD MOTION IN FLIGHT

There are times when a slow shutter speed can produce a creative effect. Using a shutter speed in the region of 1/15sec to 1/60sec while panning a moving subject can create a sense of motion and energy. Keep the bird at the same point in the frame and pan smoothly using your hips for a sharp shot.



3) SHOOT A SWAN PORTRAIT

A portrait should be perfectly exposed with the eye pin sharp. Differential focus can be used to add interest to your compositions. Look for other birds to include in the background and throw them out of focus by using a wide aperture. This encourages the viewer's eye to explore the frame.

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PHOTO
SKILLS

GET CREATIVE WITH BOKEH

PRO PHOTOGRAPHER CATHERINE MACBRIDE DELIVERS A TECHNIQUE THAT GUARANTEES SPARKLING RESULTS

CAMERA: CANON EOS 6D / LENS: CANON EF 50MM F/1.4

BEFORE I FOUND my passion for photography I was in love with bokeh. Being a child with bad eyesight had its advantages and one of my happiest childhood memories is when I would sit in the backseat of my parents' car, take my glasses off and watch the whole world turn into beautiful light dappled blur. Street lights and house lights turned into golden globes and, if I squinted my eyes, I could turn the balls of light into stars.

Years later I discovered photography and found out I could create and photograph this dotted blur, technically named 'bokeh', leading to a long-time love affair with shooting wide open with my 50mm f/1.4 lens. With the addition of a simple piece of black card, with a shape cut out of its centre, I learned how I could change the shape of the bokeh to whatever I wanted, from hearts or shamrock to stars and skull and crossbones, making it even more fun.



1 CUTOUT A CIRCULAR DISC Place the UV filter onto the card and use it as a template to draw around. If you don't have a UV filter you can use the end of your lens as a template, or draw a circle using a drawing compass. Carefully cut out the circle.



4 FIX YOUR LIGHTS IN PLACE Stick your LED lights to a clean background using Sellotape. Spread them out, as having them too close together can cause them to blur into one another, losing the bokeh shape. It might take a few adjustments to get it right.

With this in mind, and with Valentine's Day on the horizon, I thought I'd use this as an excuse to make a little love heart bokeh. The instructions can be used for any shape you can imagine – as long as you have the dexterity and patience to cut it out of card.

In terms of kit, you'll need a fast prime lens: I found my 50mm f/1.4 worked perfectly. I also tried using both 50mm f/1.8 and 40mm f/2.8 lenses. Both worked well; however, I found that the slower the lens's maximum aperture, the smaller the shape that I had to cut out to produce a similar effect.

To try this technique, you'll need some LED lights (I used a mix of red and white), some black card, a craft knife or scissors and a UV filter to hold the card in place. You'll also need a main subject for your image, I chose a little paper house but you can use your imagination here. The final piece of equipment is a hand torch, which is used to throw some light on the house.



2 CUT YOUR SHAPE Fold the circle in half and then half again to find the centre point. Using a sharp craft knife, carefully cut out your shape of choice. Take your time with this stage and take care not to crinkle or tear the card – or cut yourself!



HAVE SOME FUN WITH BOKEH

The best shots created using this technique come from when there's a relationship between the subject and the shape of the bokeh. Hearts, stars, Christmas trees, even skull and crossbones are possible with a little patience and thought.



3 SECURE THE CARD IN PLACE Place the card with the heart pointing the right way up, depending on your shot orientation. Attach the UV filter to keep it in place. If you aren't using a UV filter you can secure the card using a small piece of tape or Blu-Tac.



5 PREPARE FOR THE SHOT (left) Place your main subject far enough away from the lights so that when you focus on it the bokeh is heart-shaped, this may take a few moves to get just right. Fix your camera on a tripod and use a remote release, or self-timer.

6 CAMERA SETTINGS (above) Use manual mode and open up the aperture. I found ISO 400 and a shutter speed of 1/200sec worked – use a higher ISO or slower shutter speed if required. Focus on the house, shine the torch on it and take your shot.



HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS!

With a little bit of preparation, it's easy to create striking shots in your home.

Exposure: 1/200sec at f/1.4 (ISO 400)

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PHOTO
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FROM THE SHADOWS

PROFESSIONAL PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHER PAUL WARD SHOWS YOU HOW TO CRAFT
LIGHT AND SHADOW TO CREATE A DRAMATIC LOW-KEY PORTRAIT IN MINUTES...

CAMERA: NIKON D800 / LENS: NIKKOR AF-S 24-70MM F/2.8G ED / LIGHTING: BOWENS GEMINI 500R STUDIOFLASH WITH SOFTBOX

AS PHOTOGRAPHERS WE understand the importance of good light. But, more often than not, good images are as much about what you do not see as what you do. Shadow is just as important as light, it creates drama, depth and dimension.

Low-key portraiture is a good technique to practise as it illustrates the effect that shadow can have not only on the feel of an image, but also the look of your subject. This style of shadow-led lighting is referred to as chiaroscuro (Italian for light-dark) and is favoured by some of the world's most highly sought-after photographers, such as Joey Lawrence, Annie Leibovitz and Dan Winters. In contrast to high-key portraits, which require bright walls and lots and lots of light, low-key portraits are incredibly energy efficient and simple to shoot! One light, a camera, a space to shoot in and a willing subject are all you need.

KNOW YOUR LIGHTING

No matter what lighting method you're using in portraiture, there are two styles for lighting a face: broad and short. Broad lighting is when the lit side of your subject's face is closest to the camera, whereas short lighting is when the shadow side of your subject's face is closer. Broad lighting tends to suit those with a narrow face, whereas short lighting suits those with a more rounded face, as it's more flattering.

SHORTLIGHT



BROAD LIGHT



1 ELIMINATE THE AMBIENT Pick a location with low light. It doesn't have to be pitch black – anywhere indoors where you can close the curtains will do. Select manual exposure mode at a low ISO, set your shutter speed to your camera's sync speed (usually around 1/200sec) and pick an aperture of f/8. Take a test shot – the image should be black. If not, stop the aperture down further and try again.



2 SETUP THE LIGHT Move your subject into position. Set up your flash at around 45° to one side, at just above head height. You can fire your flash bare, or use a modifier; a softbox is ideal as you can feather it to reduce the light hitting the background. Set your flash to 1/8 power and take a test shot. Check the LCD monitor, assess the exposure on your subject and adjust the power if required.



3 ADJUST THE LIGHT If the light is illuminating the backdrop, then either move everything (camera, subject and light) further away from the background, or turn down the flash power and move the flash closer to your subject. Your exposure will be similar but with less light bouncing around. Alternatively you can flag the flash by using something to block the light from hitting the backdrop.



4 ANGLE THE LIGHT Adjusting the position of the light in relation to your subject completely changes the mood of the shot. Just by moving the light further around the front of Gemma, we can create an evenly-lit portrait. In contrast, positioning the light on-axis to her the result is more dramatic. Lighting a portrait like this is as much about deciding what to hide in shadow as it is what to show.

5 ADD A REFLECTOR This final step is optional as it all depends on the look that you are going for. Try positioning a silver or white reflector opposite your flash to bounce light back on to the shadow side of your subject – you can see the difference above. A silver reflector will fill in more than a white one, but the light will be colder. The distance between reflector and subject dictates the amount of fill light.



ME AND MY SHADOW!

As the image comprises of contrasting highlights and shadows, a black & white conversion suits the final result.

Exposure: 1/160sec at f/8 (ISO 100)

Extend dynamic range with precise control

LEARN HOW TO USE LAYER MASKS TO DODGE AND BURN SELECTIVELY

PICK ANY ADJUSTMENT that you can make in Photoshop Elements and we guarantee that there will be at least three ways to carry out that alteration. We would always advocate using methods that are both nondestructive and easy to revisit and adjust as required. This is where the strengths of Layer Masks and Adjustment Layers really shine through.

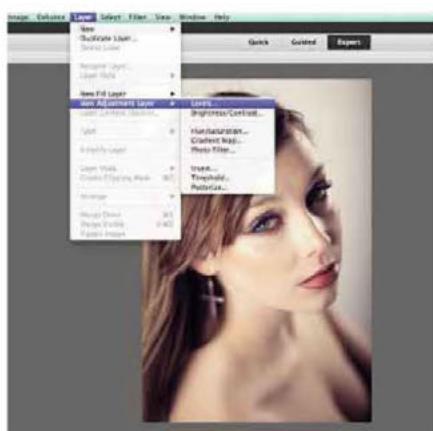
When you apply an Adjustment Layer to your image you aren't affecting the image

itself, so any changes that you make can be done without detrimental affect to image quality, or fear of making an irreversible mistake. When you then use a Layer Mask on that Adjustment Layer you can apply the changes selectively – what's more, even the Layer Mask itself is reversible, so you can paint over it to change the areas that the Adjustment Layer affects time and time again.

Here, we're going to use Levels to dodge and burn this studio portrait to bring it to life.



ORIGINAL



1 ADD AN ADJUSTMENT LAYER Start by adding your first Adjustment Layer – go to **Layer>New Adjustment Layer** and choose your adjustment from the list. Here, we're going to use a **Levels** adjustment layer to dodge and burn our image, starting with dodging (increasing exposure).



2 MAKE THE ADJUSTMENT In the Adjustments palette, drag the *mid-tone slider* left to lift the mid-tones. Then select the attached Layer Mask in the Layers palette, hold down the *cmd* key (Mac) or *ctrl* key (PC) and press the */* key to invert the mask to hide the effect – next we'll brush it back in.



3 BRUSH TO REVEAL Select the **Brush Tool** and, within Brush Settings along the top toolbar, set the *Hardness* to **0%**, *Opacity* to **20%** and choose a brush **Size**. With **White** set as your **Foreground Color**, brush on areas of the image that need to be brightened slightly, like eyes and skin.



4 TWEAK SETTINGS Adjustment Layers allow you to go back and tweak the settings. Click on the Adjustment Layer in the Layers palette and make any changes. Once happy, add another Adjustment Layer, choosing **Levels** again. This time we'll take care of burning (decreasing exposure).



5 RINSE AND REPEAT Repeat steps 2 and 3, this time moving the *mid-tone slider* to the right before editing the Layer Mask in the same manner. This multiple layer technique can also be used to target very specific image areas: we added a third Levels adjustment layer to darken the distracting earring.



6 WORK SELECTIVELY You aren't just limited to dodging and burning. Any adjustment layer can be applied alongside a Layer Mask, allowing you to target parts of your image. Here, we've used a Brightness/Contrast adjustment layer to boost just the model's hair, eyes and mouth, masking off the skin.

A close-up, profile photograph of a woman's face. She has long, dark brown hair with highlights and is looking slightly upwards and to the right. Her eye makeup is prominent, featuring dark eyeliner and mascara. Her lips are painted with a light pink shade. The lighting is soft, creating a gentle shadow on the left side of her face.

RIGOROUS SELECTION PROCESS

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go back in and re-edit at any time!



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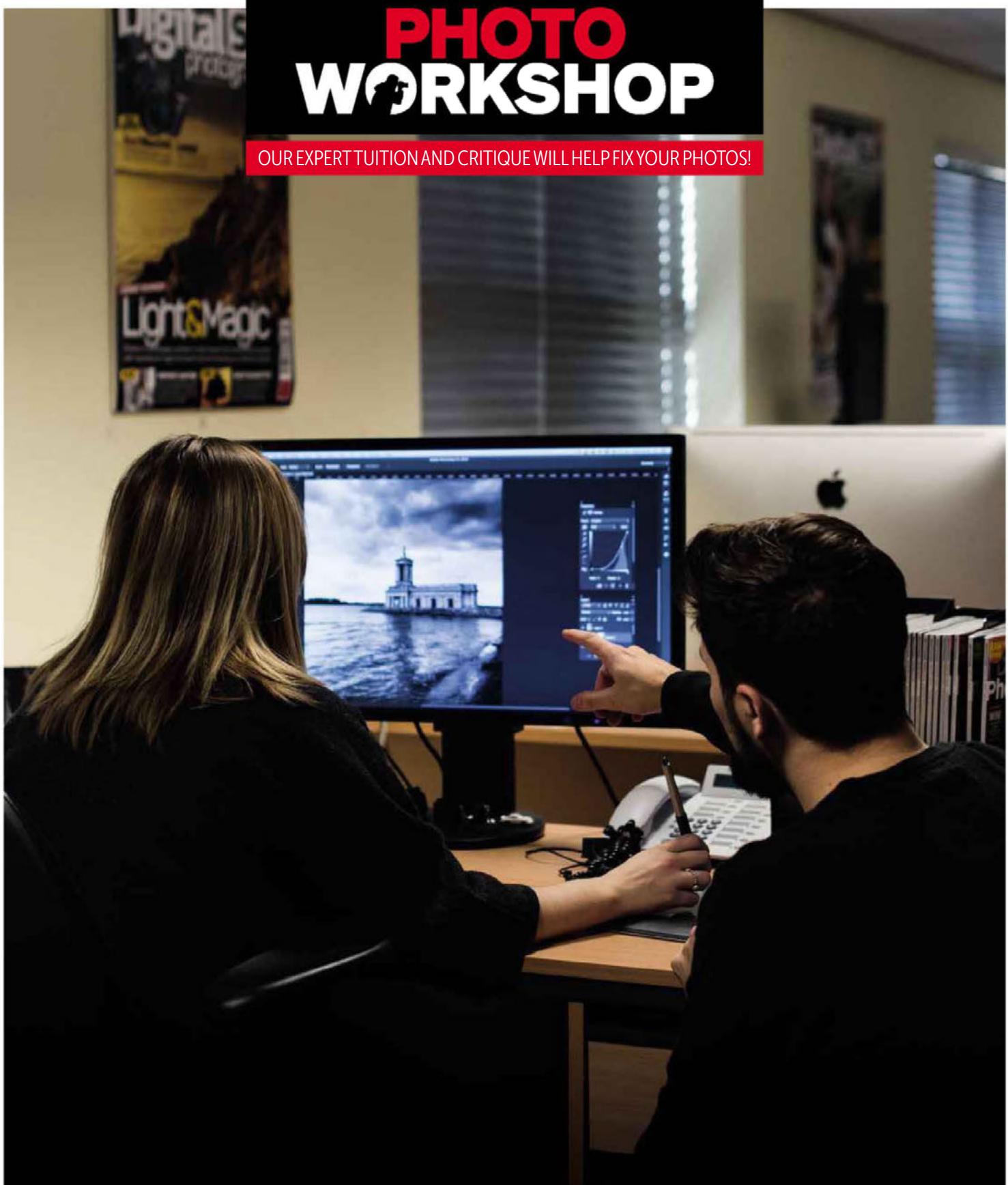
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PLUS: Your images assessed in *Expert Critique* Pg 50

OUR READER: Isabel Mendoza

A newcomer to photography, Isabel recently picked up a second-hand Canon EOS 550D and a superzoom. She enjoys photographing landscapes and travel images, but has just started shooting in Raw and wants to gain a better understanding on the post-processing side of image making.

Isabel's kit: Canon EOS 550D with a Canon EF-S 18-105mm f/3.5-5.6 IS lens.

Software: Photoshop CS5

OUR EXPERT: Jordan Butters

Senior features writer Jordan is our resident Photoshop expert and guides Isabel through some of the simple post-processing techniques that he would recommend using in order to process this image.

Jordan's software: Photoshop CC

GIVEN THE TYPICAL weather in the UK it should come as no surprise that Isabel's photographic ambitions were dampened by a grey, overcast day. On the plus side, these conditions lead to soft, diffused light, so any problems with contrast and dynamic range are avoided, however Isabel's shot of Normanton church, in Rutland, has been left looking flat and uninteresting. Her image is nicely composed, pin-sharp and well-exposed, with no clipped highlights, but her post-processing requires refinement.

Before starting to process, it's good to have an idea of the desired outcome. I like Isabel's idea of bringing back that brooding sky and, with that in mind, feel that the shot would be better suited to black & white – Isabel agrees. After opening the Raw file in ACR I use Lens Corrections to fix the distortion and vignette in the Raw file, the latter of which Isabel cropped out of her final image, before setting the White Balance to Cloudy and levelling the horizon using the Straighten tool.

Once in Photoshop, I start with the monochrome conversion, which is applied using a Black & White adjustment layer. This allows Isabel to adjust the luminosity of each colour channel individually. Using this technique, I demonstrate to Isabel how to adjust the brightness of the red and orange channels to make the church stand out.

Next, we need to bring back some detail in the clouds. Isabel has used the Magic Wand Tool to select the sky before using the Exposure slider to decrease the brightness, however this has resulted in halos along the horizon and around the church. I show Isabel how to use a Curves adjustment layer to lower the exposure of the shadows and mid-tones. The advantage of this over an overall exposure adjustment is that you retain the highlights, vital for creating depth.

ISABEL'S ORIGINAL IMAGE



Above: Isabel's edit suffers from halos along the horizon.
Right: Using Adjustment Layers transformed Isabel's image.
Far right: With the right techniques and a bit of patience the original shot is transformed into a cracking final image.

I then show Isabel how to use a graduated layer mask to prevent that adjustment from affecting the church and foreground. This works much like using an ND grad filter, and a smooth transition in the mask avoids the telltale halos of Isabel's original edit. Some attention to the mask around the top of the church using the Brush Tool ensures that the adjustment doesn't creep onto the spire.

The image quickly looks promising, but lacks punch due to the flat lighting. After adding contrast with another Curves layer with a subtle S-shaped curve, I guide Isabel through Levels adjustment layers to dodge and burn (turn to page 44 for more on this) – adding depth to the shadows around the church, and darkening the sky in places. A slight crop using the Crop Tool to remove some of the negative space on the left and use of the Clone Stamp Tool to remove the people sitting by the church and we're done!

**VERDICT** Isabel Mendoza

"The biggest revelation is how simple Layer Masks are. I'd always shied away from them as I thought they were more complicated than they actually are. Jordan's advice was really useful and I now find that by using Adjustment Layers I can try different effects without fear of ruining my image if I get it wrong. I've not quite got the hang of dodging and burning yet, but I'm getting there slowly!"



Expert critique

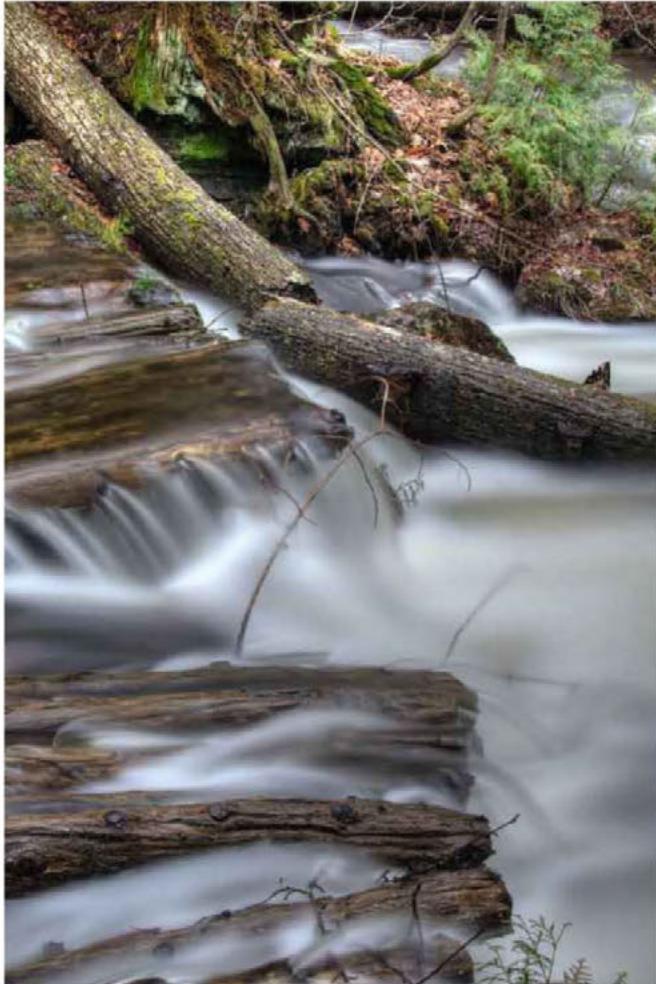
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FERREE RIVER

by Robin Lefrancois

Nikon D5000 with NIKKOR 18-200mm f/3.5-5.6 lens.
Exposure: Six seconds at f/22 (ISO 200).

What we think: We're fans of milky water, but think a slightly faster exposure would have produced better results in this instance. A six-second exposure has blurred all detail and created hotspots where the highlights have overexposed. A shutter speed in the region of 0.5 to one second is all you need for fast-flowing waterfalls; it's long enough to create attractive blur, but not too long that it removes detail. It's often a case of experimenting with shutter speeds to find one that gives you that balance. Finally, landscape orientation may have been more engaging as it lets the viewer's eye wander around a larger scene, whereas the tight vertical composition immediately leads the eye in with the rocks and out with the logs.



DINNER TIME

by Viktor Davare

Canon EOS-1DX with Canon EF 400mm f/2.8L IS II lens.
Exposure: 1/1600sec at f/4 (ISO 400).

What we think: This is a cracking capture! The central composition works surprisingly well: it gives space for the eagle to fly in to but also leaves room for the drops of water, which lets the viewer know that the action has just happened. By backlighting the bird, Viktor has illuminated detail in the eagle's feathers and the ripples of moving water for a nice backdrop that helps add motion to the shot. Viktor's choice of shutter speed has created a crisp action shot with just a hint of blur in the eagle's wings.

Why it works

- ✓ Strong choice of composition
- ✓ Backlighting complements the scene
- ✓ Fast shutter speed captures the moment





LOW TIDE AT TWILIGHT by Mark Sims

Nikon D7100 with NIKKOR AF-S 16-85mm f/3.5-5.6 lens.

Exposure: 35 seconds at f/13 (ISO 200).

Filters: Lee Filters Little Stopper and Hi-Tech 0.6 ND grad.

LANDSCAPE EXPERT Ross Hoddinott



"I really like the simplicity of this shot. The sky is beautiful and the posts create an interesting and striking focal point. I think Mark has got the proportions just right for the composition, opting for a big sky and placing the posts central. I also like the aspect ratio Mark has opted for. In an ideal world, I would prefer the tops of the posts to be below the horizon, rather than just touching it. However, I suspect Mark had no other option in the circumstances. A lovely image and one to be proud of!"

WATER COLLISION by Joe Dyer

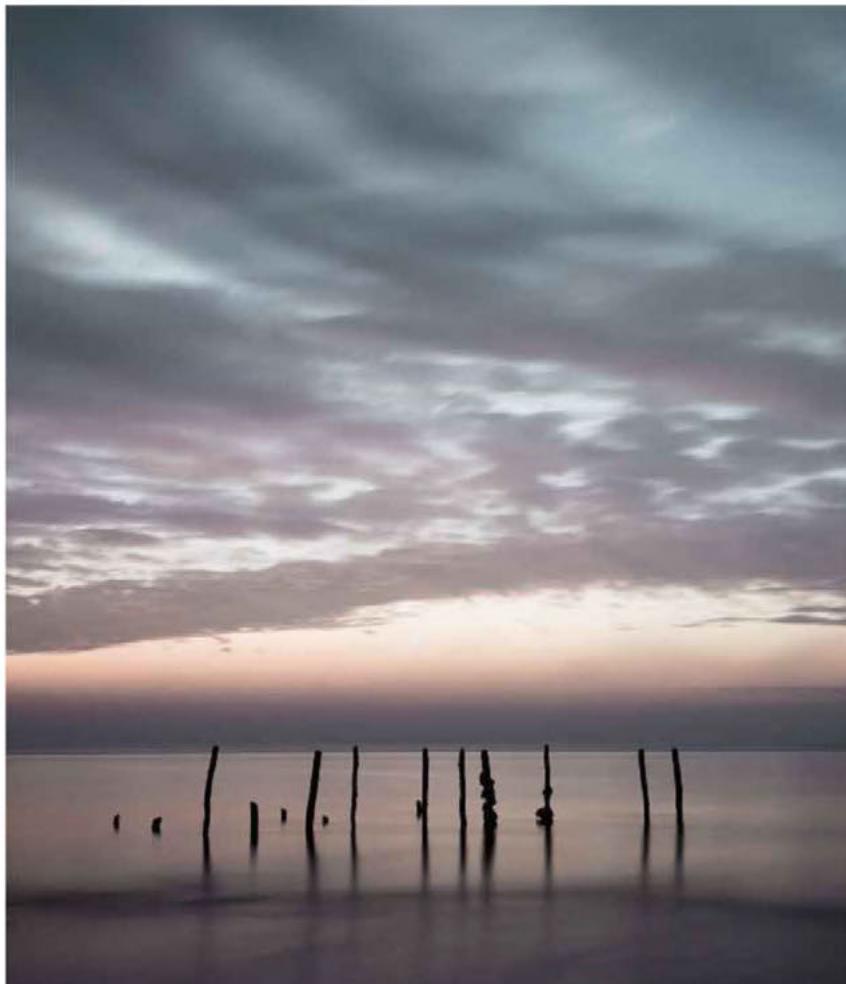
Canon EOS 7D with Canon EF 100mm f/2.8L Macro IS USM.

Exposure: 1/200sec at f/16 (ISO 100).

What we think: Wow! Joe has clearly mastered the art of high-speed water drop photography. Due to the complexity of the splash we'd guess that he's used a control system to regulate the timing of the drops. Being critical, we'd like to see a bit more space at the bottom of the image, otherwise it's hard to find fault with this!

Why it works

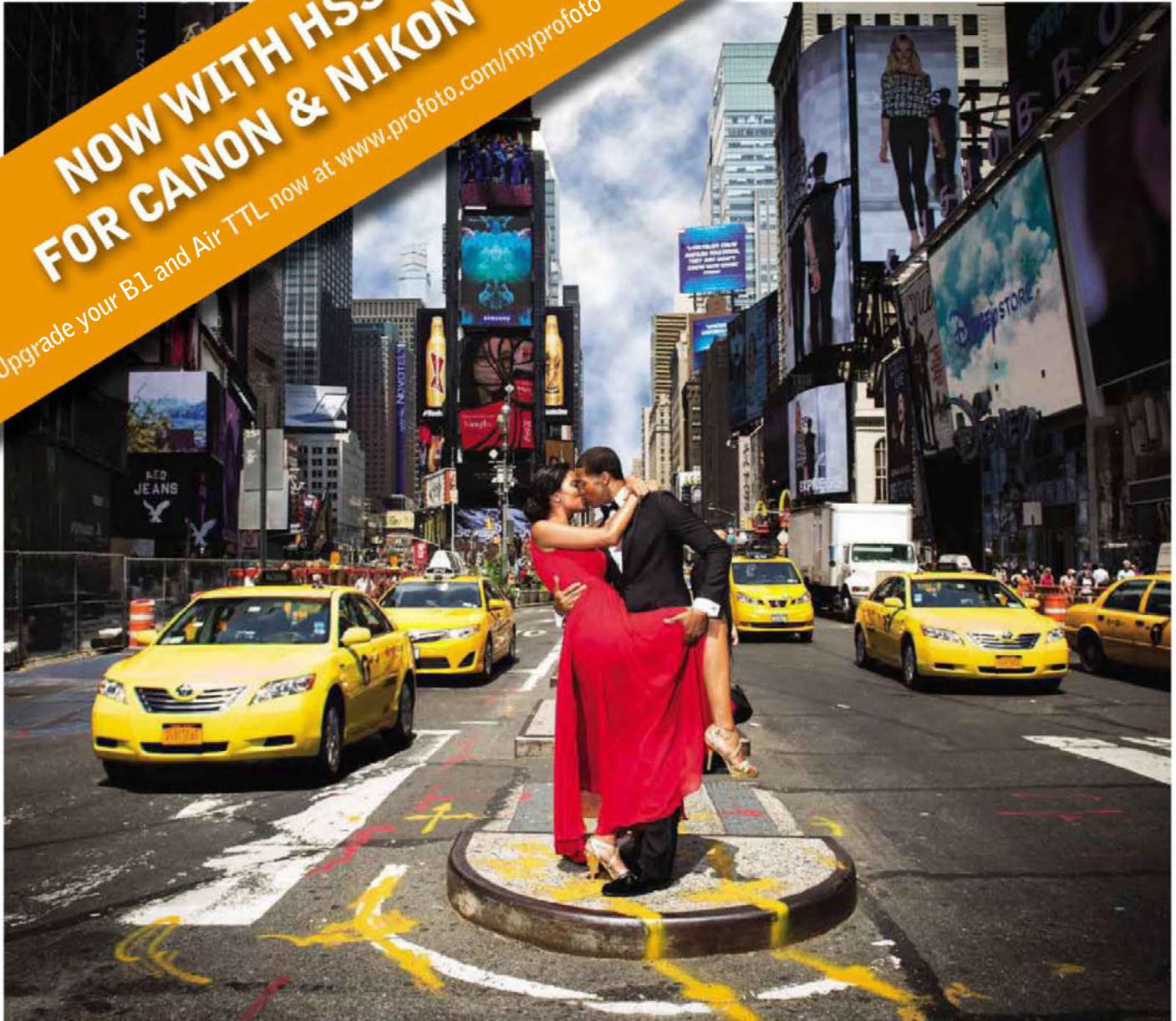
- ✓ Perfect timing to capture intricate splash
- ✓ Good use of contrasting colours
- ✓ Great execution of a popular subject



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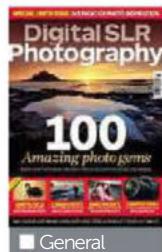
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- ✓ Emails exceeding 8MB total size might not arrive, so split your submission down into two or more emails to ensure they get through.
- ✓ Please don't send us your entire portfolio – as you may appreciate we receive a lot of submissions and aren't able to look through hundreds of images – narrow the selection down and pick your best shots only.



SciFi Fashion Shoot

Hasselblad H5-50D,
80mm/2.8 at f16.
2 x Broncolor Strip Lights.
1 x 6ft fluorescent tube.

Filter used:
0.9 ND ProGlass

As images go, this was one of the more complex ones. I wanted to capture this in one shot and to do so required a fluorescent light tube swirling around the model on an 11 second exposure combined with a burst of flash from my studio lights to illuminate the model correctly.

I'd determined an exposure of f16 for the flash but the fluorescent tube was too bright, so I applied a LEE 0.9 ND ProGlass filter (3 stops) for part of the exposure and then fired the flash immediately after an assistant switched off the fluorescent tube. The model held her pose still and the result hopefully speaks for itself. Once again LEE Filters were an important part of the success of this image.

Watch the video of the shoot and technique here:
www.karltaulorportfolio.com/film-video



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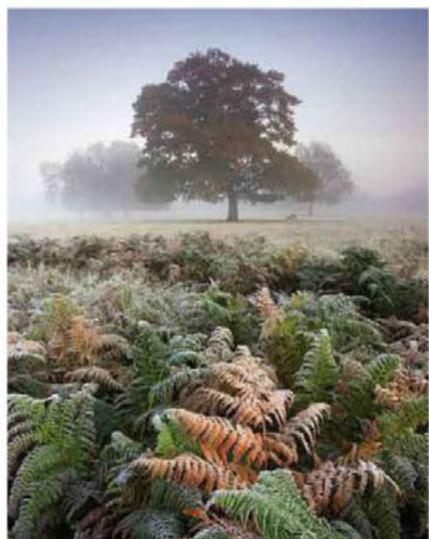
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1

Use filters

Often overlooked, filters should be a vital part of any self-respecting landscape photographer's kit. Not only do they encourage the ethos of getting the image right in-camera, but there are also certain filters that can't be replicated in processing. ND filters, for example, block light from reaching the sensor, extending exposure times and adding dynamic motion. Polarisers on the other hand cut reflections, adding punch and vibrancy to blue skies and foliage.

IMAGE: HELEN DIXON



HELEN DIXON



HELEN DIXON



HELEN DIXON

2 Shoot in all weather

If you're a fair-weather photographer, you're missing out on all the best potential! Rainy days bring with them brooding stormy skies, adding far more interest than you'll find on a sunny, cloudless day. Mist is another great element to look out for, and can add atmosphere to any scene. Even overcast days create soft, even light – perfect for avoiding harsh shadows.

3 Capture reflections

Take a moment to reflect – literally! Reflections can be used as foreground interest or even as the main focal point of your image. Either way, they work best when paired with an interesting, colourful sky. One creative idea is to fill the frame with the reflection before rotating the image 180° in processing – at first glance the viewer won't know which way is up!

4 Wait for the sun

We've all been there – you're set up, shot composed and ready to shoot – it's just a case of waiting for that gorgeous light. But it doesn't materialise. Rather than sulking off home, make an effort to wait it out. All it takes is a split-second of sun bursting through the cloud and you'll have yourself a killer shot. Pack up and you know the sun will appear as soon as you drive off!



ROSS HODDINOTT

5 Use vanishing points As compositional tools go, you don't get much stronger than vanishing points for showing perspective, depth and for leading the viewer into your image. Classic examples include paths, roads, fences, railway lines and rows of trees. Consider the point at which the lines converge within your frame and include it as part of your composition, remembering that the first thing that your viewer's eye will do is follow the path to the vanishing point. This can be used to your advantage when positioning points of interest within the image.

HELEN DIXON



6 Blur water It's a technique that divides opinion, but we're fans of it here in the *Digital SLR Photography* office. When you shoot a long exposure, moving water is rendered as an ethereal, milky mist, making scenes more dynamic. Coastal scenes and waterfalls are the most popular candidates. Experiment with exposure times – it's often best to retain texture in the water with a slightly shorter exposure rather than go for a complete haze. Light levels will dictate exposure times, unless you invest in an ND filter, which blocks the amount of light reaching the sensor.

ADAM BURTON

7 Take a road trip

Opt for a change of scenery and take a photographic road trip. Our *Location Guide* series covers the best that the British Isles has to offer – from the Cornish coast up to The Great Moor of Rannoch, from well-known spots to well-kept secrets. This month's guide (Page 21), about the Northern Dales, will have you setting your sat-nav for Yorkshire before you know it.



8 Shoot a panoramic

Take in a wider view by shooting several images and merging them into a panoramic. Set up your camera on a tripod and use manual mode to ensure your exposure remains the same and you get a clean stitch. Panoramics can be horizontal, vertical or even spherical – software such as Photoshop, PTGui or Autopano makes stitching your images together a doddle.



9 Capture a time-lapse

Time-lapses condense long periods of time down into short video clips, and suit all kinds of scenes – from the early morning sun bursting through the clouds to flowers sprouting from the forest floor. You'll need patience, and an intervalometer remote to trigger your camera every few seconds, minutes or hours, depending on your subject. If you've got a newer camera check in the menu – many new DSLRs and CSCs offer built-in time-lapse functions.

10

Shoot a big sky

Landscapes don't always have to focus on the land. Try composing your shot so that the land only occupies a small portion at the bottom of the frame. This works best when presented with an interesting sky full of drama, colour or attractive puffy clouds.

IMAGE: LEE FROST



HELENDIXON



11 Seasonal colours

The icy whites of winter, the colourful blooms of spring, the green grass and blue skies of summer and the burnt auburn of autumn; it's easy to see why landscape photographers are besotted with the changing seasons. As a project, why not aim to capture the same scene throughout the seasons? Pick a good vantage point or feature a lone tree as your subject and use the exact same position and focal length for each shot for maximum impact.

12 Create a study

Pick a topic or subject and shoot with the intention of putting together a body of work. It can be a place, a single subject or a theme, such as water, for example.

Try and stick to a consistent style when shooting and editing – this will add cohesion to the project when it all comes together.

Five tips for impactful landscapes

13 Use a sun compass

The Photographer's Ephemeris (www.photoephemeris.com) or Sun Seeker (iOS & Android) apps can be used to plot sunrise and sunset angles and times in advance. Be prepared!

14 Use a tripod & remote

Even the slightest camera movement degrades sharpness. A good tripod not only prevents camera shake but slows down the process too. A remote release eliminates vibrations from pressing the shutter.

15 Use compositional aids

Slow down and consider your composition – look for frames, use foreground interest to add depth, or lead-in lines to guide the viewer through the frame.

16 The rules of composition

The rule-of-thirds should come as second nature, but don't be afraid to deviate when the scene calls for it. Some of the most striking images come from breaking the rules.

17 Maximise depth-of-field

Shoot using a mid-to-narrow aperture (f/8 to f/13) and use a hyperfocal distance calculator to work out the best point for maximum depth-of-field. If in doubt focus a third of the way into the scene.



HELENDIXON



HELENDIXON

18 Shoot seasonal flowers

Here in the UK we're spoilt when it comes to seasonal flowers. We get snowdrops in late winter, crocus and daffodils in early spring, bluebells a bit later on, sunflowers and poppies in summer before heather blooms in early autumn. You usually only have a short window when the bloom is at its best, so research potential locations before the flower starts to show.

19 Use natural frames

Natural frames are arrangements or objects within a scene that can be used to frame another element. When used correctly, they're useful compositional aids that can direct a viewer's eye through a scene. Natural frames include doorways, trees with overhanging branches, rock formations, fence posts – anything that can be used as a border within your image.

20 Look for layers

Seek out a high vantage point and use a telephoto to compress the layers in the landscape – a 70-200mm telezoom is perfect. This works well when there are rolling hills and undulations in the landscape, and even better when coupled with mist or fog in the valleys! Aim to shoot when the sun is low in the sky and back- or side-lighting the landscape.





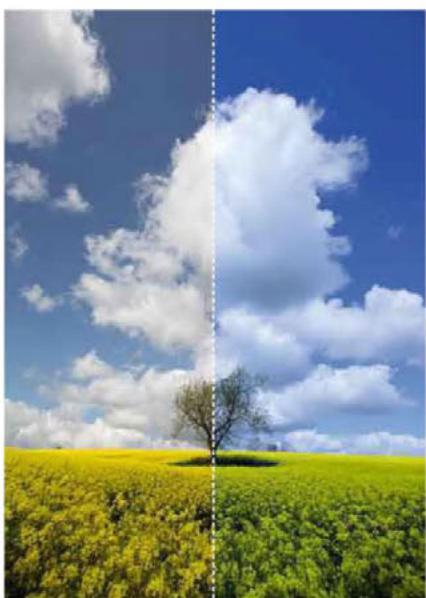
BRETT HARKNESS

21 Lens perspective

It's important to have a general understanding of the important relationship between a lens's focal length and perspective. When shooting a scene, your choice of lens determines how your main subject relates to the area behind them. Use a wide-angle close to the subject and you increase depth. However, use a telephoto lens while standing further away and you compress the scene, reducing perspective. Understanding the fundamentals of lens choice is important, so carry out a simple experiment to get to grips with perspective. All you need to do is photograph a person in the centre of a street with buildings either side. Start with a wide-angle and take a shot with them in the centre of the frame. Now use lenses with increasingly longer focal lengths, keeping your subject the same size in the frame. Review the images and note how perspective alters the background.



22 Master the histogram One of the major benefits of shooting on digital is the ability to instantly review your images on the LCD monitor. However, while there is no denying it gives a good representation of your images, your camera's screen isn't perfect, with the real possibility that your final image may differ substantially in exposure. The best way to minimise this risk is by having the histogram also displayed. A histogram provides a graphic display of how tones are recorded within the image, which allows you to check that you're not losing essential highlight or shadow detail. By understanding how a histogram should look for different types of scenes, you'll minimise the risk of disappointing exposures.



DANIELLE LEZZANO

23 Explore Raw

While many happily shoot JPEGs, there are strong reasons why you should shoot in Raw. The key benefit is image quality – Raw files are unprocessed and can be edited on your computer to give better results than in-camera JPEGs. Raw files are more robust for editing, allowing you to manipulate exposures, correct errors such as shooting with the wrong White Balance and also extract far more detail from them when editing.



24 Learn new modes

We all have our favourite modes and functions that we use for the vast majority of our shots, be that aperture-priority, manual or multi-zone. But what about the ones you never try? Why not set yourself a learning project and spend say, one day per week, using a mode or function you've not tried before. By doing this, you'll discover its purpose and benefits and in the future, when presented with a situation that merits its usage, you'll know what to do.



BRETT HARKNESS

25 Practise your focusing

With AF systems proving so adept, many leave the autofocus set to multi-point and capture everyday subjects with ease. But how about if the subject is off-centre, small in the frame or obscured by other objects or moving quickly? Learning how to control the AF system to choose an individual or small groups of AF points, as well as trying AF modes like continuous and LiveView, will improve your success rate with challenging subjects.



26 At home in the wild

If you're planning on a photographic wildlife expedition and need to hone your skills, or want a good chance of capturing decent wildlife images, head to one of the UK's many wildlife, wetland or birds of prey centres. The main advantage these locations offer is the chance to get closer to a wide range of wildlife than would be possible if you were trying to stalk them in the wild. Many wildlife or bird centres have photography days and special events suited to enthusiast photographers, while wetland centres offer hides and plenty of onsite species. Get in touch with your local wildlife trust for details on local centres. Whether you're looking for general wildlife, birds of prey, wetland wildlife or big cat sanctuaries, there is sure to be a location close by. Websites to visit include: www.wwt.org.uk, www.britishwildlifecentre.co.uk and www.devonbirdofprey.co.uk.



ROSS HODGKINSON

27 Shoot a silhouette

Sometimes, a very underexposed subject is exactly what we want. We're talking silhouettes of course. By metering for the brighter background, you'll find it's very easy to turn a relatively ordinary subject into a stunning silhouette. Choose an animal with a distinctive outline, such as a stag or hare. Use spot metering and lock the exposure from the sky behind the subject, to ensure the subject records as a solid black.



28 Set up a garden hide

Most UK gardens are regularly visited by a variety of attractive garden birds, from finches to woodpeckers to tits. Few, if any, will allow you to approach close enough to fill the frame before taking flight, so another tactic is required. One of the best is to shoot from a hide. We'd recommend www.wildlifewatchingsupplies.co.uk, which offers an extensive range.



29 Try a photo workshop

While your garden, local parks and nearby countryside offer enormous potential for great wildlife images, it's worth making the effort to go on a wildlife workshop. You'll spend time with other photographers, receive expert insight from a pro, visit new locations and capture shots of animals that you've encountered before. Not only will you learn new skills and techniques, but you'll have a great time, too.



STOCK PHOTO

30 Try a low viewpoint

We're used to seeing animals from a certain height, so if you're looking for a creative spin, try shooting wildlife from a low viewpoint. Using a wide-angle lens gives a fresh perspective and exaggerate their features. Try it out with domestic animals like dogs or cows: fit the camera to a monopod, set the lens to manual focus and hold it low to the ground, continuously firing via a remote release.



31 *Unconventional crops*
While a classic head-and-shoulders portrait keeps space around the subject and the eyes in the top third of the frame, consider filling the frame with their features by getting closer to your subject. Don't be afraid to crop parts of their face out of the frame; as long as it looks deliberate, it can make a portrait more interesting.

JORDAN BUTTERS



33 *Embrace the dark side*
Natural light hides in unexpected spaces and the high contrast between pockets of light and shadow can create interesting results. Spend some time studying spaces for areas of unusually shaped light and learn how to work with it. Reflected light is also much softer than direct light, so look for areas where light is bouncing off buildings, glass, concrete or walls. Be careful of coloured surfaces though as they often reflect a cast too.

LISA VISSER



34 *Light like Rembrandt*
Master a studio lighting technique that's derived from the classic lighting used by the 17th Century painter Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn. It's denoted by the triangle of light under the eye that's least illuminated. You can recreate it using one key light high and to the side of your subject, with a reflector to bounce a small amount of light into the shadows on the opposite side. The triangle should be no bigger than the eye or longer than the nose.

ISTOCK PHOTO



35 *See things differently*
Changing your point of view is an instant way to add energy and interest to your portraits. Try having your subject lie on the ground and shoot from above; if they have long hair, spread it out as a background. You can also add vibrance to others portraits by getting low to ground and using a wide aperture to render the foreground out of focus. Taking a slightly higher viewpoint than your subject can also be more flattering than straight on.



ISTOCKPHOTO

36 Take two

Shoot a silhouette, with a white, overexposed background, and then combine it with a well exposed scene or texture. Some models of camera allow you to do this in-camera, by shooting one scene after another, or even overlaying the original using LiveView. If not, it can be done in Photoshop using Blend Modes. The results are captivating – give it a try!



ISTOCKPHOTO

37 Focus on details

Portraits need not always be of a whole face; focus on details like eyes, lips, hands and feet. Hands tell wonderful stories of generations and family, such as an old woman and her grandchild – you needn't see the faces for the image to have context. You could also use differential focusing (see 70) to highlight these details or a macro lens for a frame-filling close-up.



JESS HOLLOWAY



PAUL WARD

38 Try freestyle

You do not need flashy editing or a Lensbaby to create images with radical blur and a 'sweet spot'. You can use most short lenses and a technique called freelensing, if you can get over the fear of dust landing on your sensor. Lens manufacturers work very hard to produce glass with a flat plane of focus to maximise depth-of-field, but by taking the lens off the camera you can manually tilt this plane to randomise your focus point and radicalise your blur, very similar to a Lensbaby and a tilt-shift lens would. Manually set your exposure and use LiveView to compose.

39 Glow for it!

An amazing lighting technique to master, and all you need is a low sun. The golden glow that comes with a clear late summer or autumn evening makes an incredible backlight, adding instant dynamism to any portrait. It works especially well if your subject has dark coloured hair; while blonde looks lovely too, but it's almost unavoidable to overexpose the highlights. Set spot metering and take a reading from your subject's cheek (if they are Caucasian, otherwise take it from any mid-tone) to it's correctly exposed; adding half or full stop of exposure will help your camera's metering system handle the bright background. Fill flash or a reflector can also help reduce shadows on the face.

40 Live the dream, if only for a moment

If you dream of a big production photo shoot to make your concept for an image a reality, but lack the budget to do so, do it anyway. Contact local make-up artists, hair stylists, independent fashion stores, students who may want to broaden their portfolio and venues interested in the social media publicity. Many models starting out in their career will do time for prints, so you may not have to spend a penny. Make sure that you support everyone involved by taking behind-the-scenes photographs so they have some quality images to use for promoting their business too, as well as a copy of the final knock-out image you're all working towards. The more people involved and supporting the project, the more people will see it! Nikon Ambassador Kirsty Mitchell is an inspiration when it comes to creating elaborate photo shoots, check out her incredible portfolio: www.kirstymitchellphotography.com

KIRSTY MITCHELL





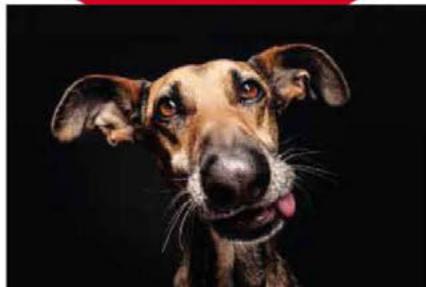
ISTOCKPHOTO

41 Shoot to seduce

Seductive portraits of women in lingerie might seem an alluring prospect for many photographers, but to do well takes craftsmanship, consideration to posing and especially lighting. There's a fine line between artistic and crass. Less is often more with these types of shoots – and no we're not talking clothes: focus on the form of the body, avoid eye contact with the camera unless you want the subject to seem inviting and use the light to ensure it's flattering and the pose subdued.

42 Be a bit flashy

Flash is daunting for many photographers and using Auto/TTL is a safe bet, but hotshoe flash limits creativity. To shoot off-camera flash, you'll either need triggers that retain TTL or to master manual flash. In manual mode, set your camera's ISO, aperture for depth-of-field and your camera's flash sync speed or slower to control ambient light. Once you have your exposure for the ambient light, and are happy with your distance from your subject, select a flash power and take a test shot. You may need to adjust the power to get the effect you want.



ELKE VOLLMER

45 Studio pet portrait

Never photograph children or animals – codswallop! Putting your pet into a controlled environment, like a studio, allows you to at least sculpt the lighting – have a few treats nearby to persuade them to stay in place long enough to get a shot too! Use one light to keep the set-up simple and focus your attention on engaging your pet using treats and games.



BRETT HARNESSE

43 Prime yourself for perfect portraits

A wider aperture suits portraits perfectly, but the wider you go the more precise your focusing needs to be. Shooting at f/5.6 or f/4 is a safe bet for most portraits, but stopping down to f/2 or even f/1.2 will give your portraits incredible soft background bokeh and really isolate their features – especially if shooting on a full-frame camera. Remember: your choice of focal length and adjusting your distance to the subject will also affect the depth-of-field. Make sure you focus on the eyes!



JORDAN BUTTERS



SEAN ARCHER

46 Above all, have fun!

They say that cobbler's kids have no shoes, so let's change that! Not literally – we're talking about photographing your own children! Try using flash to freeze them bouncing on a bed, photograph their quiet moments or go for a walk to capture them having fun. For more ambitious ideas, peruse Jason Lee's portraits of his girls: kristinandkayla.blogspot.com

47 It's all about the hair

Long hair can be used to frame a face, to make a portrait more alluring or just interesting. Vibrant reds and curls are very photogenic as is styling the hair so that it falls across one eye for a more striking or sensual style. Try adding a floor fan at 45° in front of the subject to create hair movement, or include accessories like hats to help frame their features.



44 Dazzle with daylight

A window is the go-to place for anyone who uses natural light.

What many don't know is how versatile a window can be and how the size and direction of it affects the light's quality. The larger the window the broader and softer the light; the smaller the window the narrower the light. Use a north or south-facing window and/or net curtains to diffuse the light. Alter the position of your subject and yourself in relation to the window, too, as window light can be used for even illumination, side lighting and backlighting.



STOCK PHOTO

48 Pay no attention

While strong portraits often have eye contact with the viewer, you can create intriguing and inviting portraits by having the subject gaze out of the frame or by capturing a candid moment without eye contact. Ask your subject to look off into the middle distance, ignoring the camera, shoot their profile or engage them in an activity that creates a quiet moment or laughter.



STOCK PHOTO

49 Look for cover

If the sunlight is creating unsightly shadows on your subject, look for areas of open shade. It could be under a bridge, arch, tree, or in a doorway – anywhere where the light is diffused yet illuminates their face evenly. Have your subject stand a few feet from the edge of the shade and walk slowly towards you so you can control how the light falls.



BRETT HARNESS

50 Flashes of colour

When lighting a subject with flash, try adding some colour with flash gels. You can buy them cheaply enough or substitute by attaching coloured sweet wrappers to the head of the flashgun for a similar effect. Experiment with lighting the background and also your subject. You may need to increase the flash power or exposure to compensate for the filtration.

51

A bug's life

If you've never shot close-ups of insects, you're missing out. Species like butterflies, damselflies and ladybirds are stunning magnified, extenuating their tiny colourful details. Mornings are ideal as it's when they're most inactive; once they've warmed up, you'll struggle to get close. Experiment with viewpoints and keep an eye out

for distractions in the foreground or background. Focus manually and use f/8-f/13 to maximise depth-of-field – increasing the ISO if need be.

IMAGE: ROSS HODDINOTT



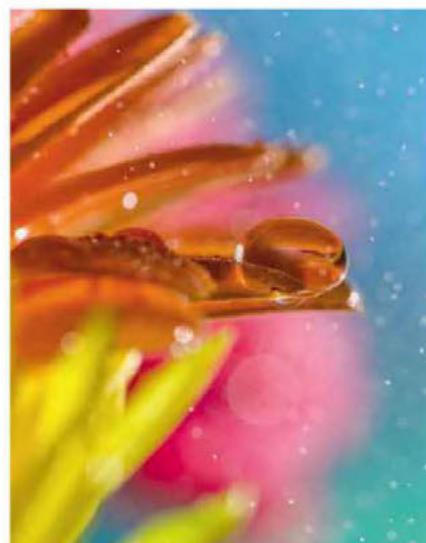
52 Capture ice patterns

Very cold weather offers the chance to head outside to capture some creative close-ups of ice patterns. Trapped air bubbles and stresses in ice create unique patterns that can form a beautiful natural abstract. Pretty much any body of water yields rewards, from ponds and water features in the garden to puddles, streams and lakes.



53 Find the fungi

On damp, overcast days, look for fungi in local woods. You'll need a tripod that can be used at low-level, while a waterproof groundsheet prevents knees getting wet. As fungi grows in dark places, use a small silver/white reflector. With small specimens, a macro lens is a must, but larger varieties, or those growing in clumps, can be captured using a standard zoom.



54 Bokeh backdrops

By using coloured sheets of plastic in the background and spraying it with water, it's possible to create a beautiful bokeh effect. Place the sheets a couple of feet behind the subject and backlight it with a table lamp. Use different colours to fill the background with attractive tones and sparkling bokeh. A wide aperture ensures water droplets are blurred.

Five things to remember about macro

55 Depth-of-field

When shooting at short distances, depth-of-field extends equally in front of and behind the subject. It is limited to mere centimetres – or even less – so shoot as parallel to the subject as possible and use as small an aperture as you can get away with to maximise sharpness.

56 Shutter speeds

One of the biggest problems you'll face with macro photography is shake caused by camera movement. Light levels are usually low and you'll be using small apertures for sharpness. Avoid shake by using your camera on a tripod when possible and raising the ISO when shake presents a real risk of causing blur.

57 Lighting the scene

Light isn't a problem when shooting outdoors on a sunny day, but often you'll need to add supplementary illumination to the scene.

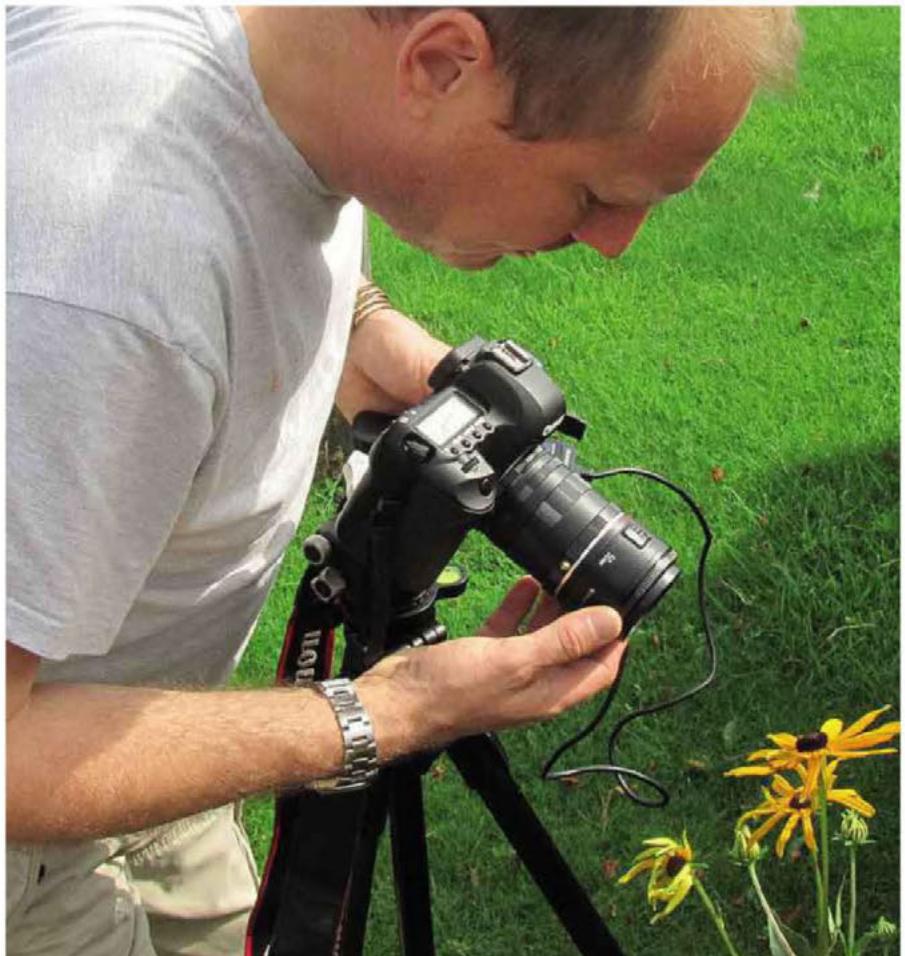
The easiest way to do this is by using a handheld reflector to bounce in light, or add flash using an off-camera flashgun, an LED ringlight or a ringflash.

58 Get a macro lens

If you're keen on shooting close-ups, then your first investment should be a specialist macro lens. Its key facility is a 1:1 (life-size) reproduction ratio that allows you to capture frame-filling images of miniature subjects. Decent lenses start from £250 – check out the Tamron 60mm and 90mm, as well as Sigma's 105mm f/2.8.

59 Budget accessory

If you cannot afford a macro lens, then there are low-cost options available. A set of close-up filters is a great option, with most sets offering +1, +2 and +4 filters for around £10. A better quality option is the £50 Raynox DCR-250 close-up attachment, which works much like a close-up filter but with better optics.



60 Use extension tubes A macro lens is the perfect choice of optic for close-up enthusiasts but you'll need to spend upwards of £250 for a good quality lens. A far more affordable option is a set of extension tubes. Usually supplied individually or as a set of three, these are hollow tubes that fit between the camera body and lens mount, allowing your lens to shoot at higher magnification. You can pick up a basic set for £10 from Amazon or eBay but your choice of camera modes and functions will be limited. We'd suggest you buy a set of auto extension tubes, which retain many camera functions making them easier to use. Our favourites are the Kenko AF set, which costs around £140.



61 Feast your eyes on this

Eyes make for interesting close-up images, so grab your macro lens and find someone you feel comfortable to have close eye contact with. Shoot somewhere with soft lighting – indoors is ideal – as it helps minimise reflections on the eyeball as well as allow the subject's pupil to widen. Have your subject tilt and rotate their head until reflections are eliminated or at least reduced.



62 Raindrops on roses

Droplets of water can be used as the primary point of focus or within the composition to provide extra interest. You can use a water spray for multiple droplets or carefully apply a single droplet using a straw. A classic technique is to rest a droplet on a leaf or on the edge of a petal and shoot using a wide aperture, this way the droplet is sharp and the rest of the scene is thrown out of focus.

100 Photo Gems

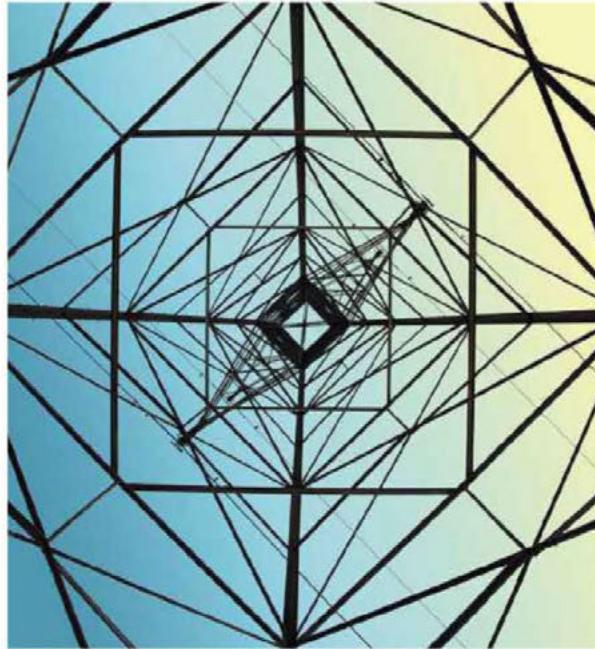
IT'S TIME TO GET CREATIVE



JORDAN BUTTERS



63 Shoot a series You can create a series out of anything as long as there's a common thread to the images. It could be that they tell a story of the same people, of an event or idea; a favourite of ours is a simple series of portraits that's bursting with personality as it shows the same people with different expressions. Once you've got your shots, you could present them in a triptych (set of three) or in a grid as a montage of images.



ISTOCK PHOTO

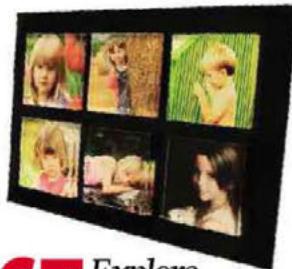
66 Repetition, repetition, repetition The power of repetition can make the simplest of images incredibly strong. Look around for lines, colours, shapes and shadows that repeat themselves within the frame. It can often strengthen a shot to have a focal point that looks slightly different from the rest, like a red bottle cap in a grid of blue bottle caps or one person facing the camera in a crowd of people. Using a zoom lens to isolate uninterrupted lines and shapes works well when creating abstract images and architecture supplies no end of picture potential, from windows and stairwells to columns and archways.



MARKUS PFEFFER

64 Take a day off: Head to the city

If you have the urge to shoot new things, visit a city for an array of potential. Pack your wide-angle lens and tripod to capture cityscapes during the golden and blue hours, and a telephoto and polarising filter to shoot architecture and city details. You could use your telephoto lens to capture candid, a short prime to shoot inconspicuously from the hip or why not stop a few strangers in the street and ask them if you could take their portrait? It's a good way to hone your skills, challenge your off-the-cuff technique and try different types of photography you normally wouldn't on a daily basis.



SEDEF

67 Explore print solutions

Creative photography does not end with a computer; finish your project with a print. Putting a print through a high street printers may produce average results, but why not try at-home printing on fine-art papers or professional metallic prints for vibrant colours. There are many print products too, such as acrylic and aluminum.



SEDEF

68 Please play with your food

Instead of styling your food in to a flawless photo inspired by an mouth-watering Marks & Spencer's advert, have some fun with your food to create a visual pun or amusing compositions. Photographically, concentrate on how you light the image so it looks like a polished still-life, not just a snap of your dinner.

65*Get nifty with your fifty*

The 'nifty fifty' is a classic and versatile prime lens, beloved by many portrait photographers not just for its price, but for its flattering perspective, pin-sharp optics and fast maximum aperture. Try using only a 50mm for a week to see how shooting wide open and moving your feet to compose can change the way you shoot. If a 50mm doesn't suit your subject matter, choose a different focal length but stick to a prime to challenge your technique.

IMAGE: PAUL WARD

**69 Showcase your shots**

If most of your images stay digital, make sure they at least don't stay in storage. Create an online portfolio album with the likes of SmugMug, join portfolio sites like 500px to be inspired as well as have your shots seen, and create a slideshow with the likes of Animoto or Photo Peach to share on social media.

**70 Be selective**

The beauty of shooting with a wide aperture is the ability to blur foreground and background to isolate a subject in your image. Most people focus on what's closest to the camera, but you can use a wide aperture and single-point autofocus to select and isolate a subject anywhere in the frame – a technique called differential focusing.

**71 Do it yourself**

Get crafty and make a subject or scene to shoot. Try creating origami and paper craft – toys can work well too. Look through the contents of your cutlery drawer or button box and employ your creative eye. Often playing with objects will produce unexpected results, but don't focus on achieving a final photograph; shoot for the joy of it.

**72 Embrace flare**

Most modern lenses eliminate flare, which makes it very difficult if you want to include it for creative effect; instead opt for old lenses with no anti-flare coatings. Shoot towards the sun, with the sun in frame or slightly out of the frame for a hazy low-contrast portrait or a string of artefacts shooting across the images, respectively.

ISTOCKPHOTO

73

Create a multiple exposure sports photo

As long as your camera has a reasonable burst rate this is quite a simple technique to try, but does involve post-production. Using continuous shooting mode, it's a matter of keeping your camera in the same position and shooting a series of frames that freeze the moving subject – it works particularly well with stunt photography or skateboarders where every frame looks a little different. In post-production, you then need to align all the frames and simply use a combination of layer masks and blend modes to reveal each frame within one picture.

IMAGE: ISTOCK PHOTO



CAROLINE SCHMIDT

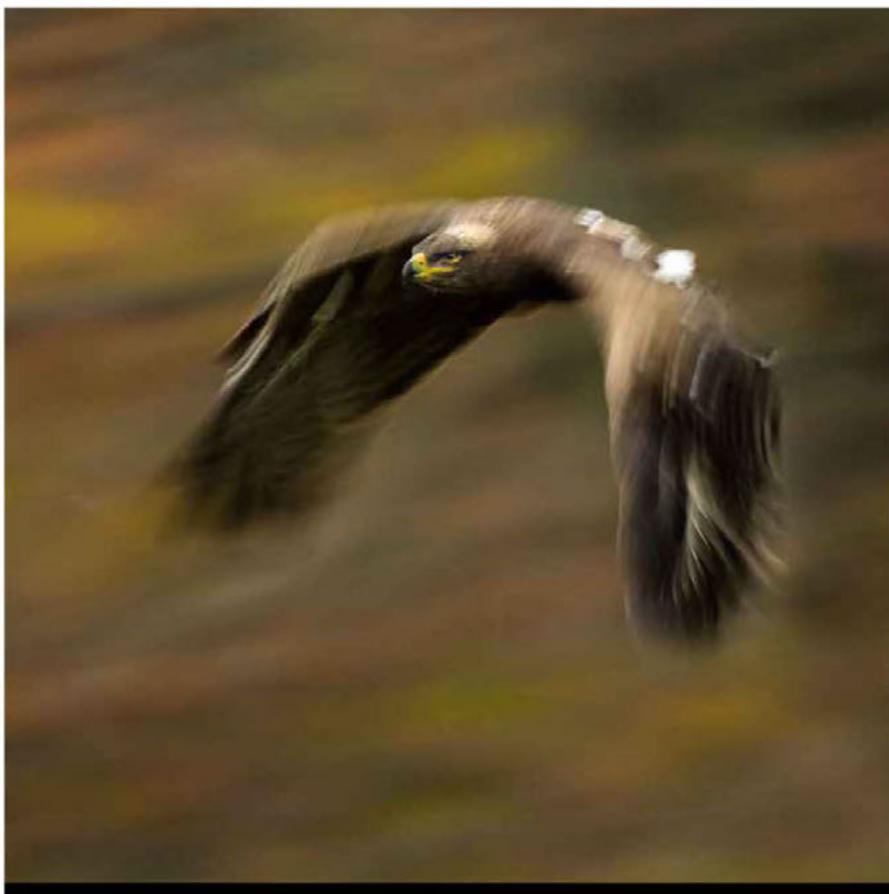
74 Shoot through an object Placing objects like glass baubles, tissue paper, bubble wrap or prisms, for instance, in front of your lens is a neat way to add style and interest to portraits. Some objects diffuse an image; others reflect or refract it, so try materials for different effects. The results depend on where the sun is and how close you have the item to the lens.



JORDAN BUTTERS

75 Perfect your focusing with sports

To freeze action, set your camera to shutter-priority mode, continuous AF and continuous shooting. Use back-button focusing, too, instead of the shutter button, as this separates your autofocus from the shutter, which helps stop the AF from bouncing off your subject if something else enters the frame.



BEN HALL



ISTOCKPHOTO

76 Pan for gold! Whether it's a car on a race track, a bird of prey in flight or your child on a bike – panning is a tricky technique worth mastering for amazing images. You need to pan your camera in line with your moving subject to ensure they stay sharp, while blurring the background to give the appearance of speed; it takes practice. Select a shutter speed slightly slower than you would if you wanted to freeze the subject. Start with 1/60sec, but you may need to go slower depending on the subject's speed but be watchful of camera shake on top of motion blur. Using a tripod with a head that allows for a smooth swivel motion of the camera can help and set yourself up parallel to the subject for easy tracking. Use your camera's predictive focusing mode to help track the subject and pre-focus on the area you want sharp, before depressing the shutter and following the moving subject.

77 Forced perspective

By changing the angle and camera-to-subject distance, and sometimes the camera's angle, you can create illusionary images. You've the tourist shots of propping up the Leaning Tower of Pisa, spouting water fountains from a mouth or appearing to pick up or sit on objects or people all created by playing with the subject-to-subject distance and maximising depth-of-field for a sharp scene.



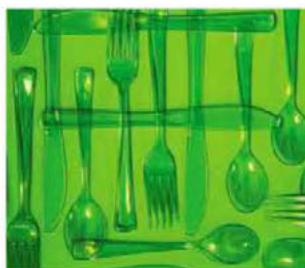
ISTOCKPHOTO

78 Add flavour to photos

Don't be deceived, it might look like a snapshot of a runny boiled egg or devoured chocolate gateau, but there's a lot of precision involved when creating a delectable food portrait. Shooting food will teach you how to flag, feather and reflect light for precise control as well as put your composition and patience to the test. Natural light is often favoured with food photography but a light tent can work, too.



DANIELLE ZANDO



CATHERINE MACBRIDE

79 Film is back Film photography has become 'retro' and we're loving the editing effects and cameras replicating film, in particular Lomography. You only need to take a glimpse at Instagram to see how crazy most people are about it. Toy cameras are relatively cheap and you download Apps that replicate certain lenses and film effects, too. Give it ago!

80 Create a collection

By shooting a themed series of images, you're often challenged to find objects you might otherwise have ignored or to look at everyday subjects in an unusual way. Try grouping subjects of the same colour together for a still-life or look for similarly coloured objects and abstracts in your local area to create a montage.



ISTOCKPHOTO

81 Smoke trails

It's all about timing, lighting and a good amount of patience for smoke trail images. Your setup is quite simple: a black background and enough space to backlight the smoke from a burning candle or incense stick. You can add colour to the white smoke in post-production or invert the image so it's black smoke on a white background.



JORDAN BUTTERS

82 Look for letters

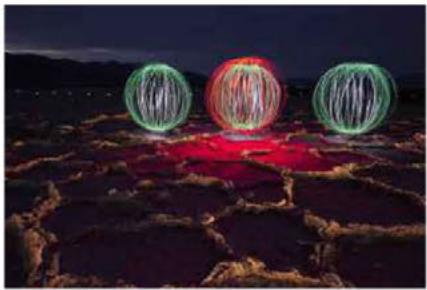
It's fun exercise to get you looking closer at the opportunities you pass by every day. Venture out with your camera and the aim to spell a word, like 'home' or a name, so you can print and frame the results. Use a zoom lens and a wide aperture to help you frame and isolate the shapes that look like letters.



JORDAN BUTTERS

83 Paint with light

Use a constant light source, such as an LED lamp or flashlight to paint an object with light during a long exposure. It involves a bit of trial and error in determining the correct exposure time, but you can achieve results similar to using several larger light sources. It's a technique best applied to static objects, such as still-life subjects and cars.



DOUG KANE

84 Create orbs of light

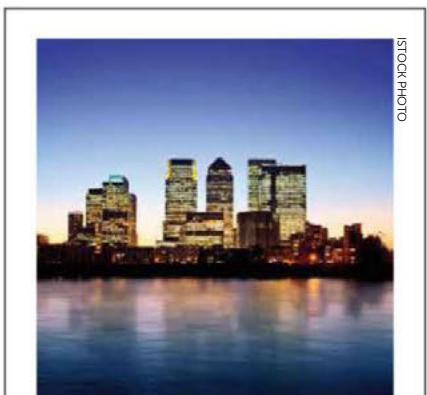
Attach a small LED keyring torch to a piece of string, mark a spot on the ground, trigger a long exposure and spin the torch in a circular motion while slowly turning, making sure that the torch passes over the same point on the ground each time. You'll look like you've lost the plot, but the results will show a mysterious orb of light hovering within the scene.



STOCKPHOTO

85 Capture lightning

Blink and you'll miss it, but shooting a lightning bolt can produce stunning results. Set your camera on a tripod a safe distance from the storm, manually focus on infinity and select an aperture of around f/8 at ISO 100-200. Triggering the camera to coincide with a lightning bolt is a tall order, so shoot continuous 30-second exposures. You can even combine multiple bolts into one image in Photoshop.



STOCKPHOTO

86 The blue hour

Leave it too late and the night sky is dark and devoid of colour. Shoot during twilight however and you'll notice an instant improvement. If you must shoot later on, aim for nights with a full moon – the moon will illuminate the land, filling in the shadows.



KRIS WILLIAMS

87 Play with fire

You'll need a kitchen whisk attached to a short length of steel cable, wire wool, goggles, gloves, a friend to help and a lighter (a nearby fire extinguisher helps too!). Stuff a small amount of the wire wool into the whisk, trigger a long exposure, set the wool alight and spin the whisk in a circle using the steel cable. Only ever try this outdoors away from flammables!



STOCKPHOTO

88 Ask for the moon

That white disc in the sky contains a surprising amount of detail when shot in the correct way. You need a long telephoto – at least 300mm on an APS-C body. The moon reflects daylight, so the settings used to photograph it are vastly different from photographing stars. Use manual mode and select around 1/200sec at f/11 (ISO 200) as a starting point.

89***Shoot traffic trails***

Capture the roads alive at night by shooting traffic trails. Oncoming cars are recorded as white streaks, while departing vehicles render as red trails. Exposure time depends on how much of the road is visible – you want to allow enough time for cars to enter and exit the frame entirely, or you'll cut the trails short.

IMAGE: ISTOCK PHOTO



ISTOCKPHOTO

90 *The fun of the fair*

When it comes to long exposure light shows, there's few more accessible than a fairground. As with most long exposure photography you'll need a tripod and remote – arrive at sunset and start shooting once the sun drops below the horizon, while there is still colour in the sky. Shoot in shutter-priority mode and experiment with exposure times.



KEITH MASON

91 *Stars at night*

In areas with low light pollution (www.darkskydiscovery.org.uk) you can create stunning night sky images using a DSLR and a wide-angle lens with fast maximum aperture. Around 25 seconds at f/4 (ISO 6400) should yield good results. Shoot the Milky Way, or create star trails by shooting over a few hours and combining the results in StarStax (bit.do/DSLR-starstax).



ISTOCKPHOTO

92 *Use alternative lights*

If it produces light, it can be used! One of the most versatile light sources can be found in your pocket – your phone! Tablet computers work well, as do torches, lamps, TVs and fairy lights. Try shooting a series of portraits illuminated only by phone light – your subjects will probably be too engrossed in their device to even notice you there!



93

Master monochrome

There are countless ways to convert your shots to black & white, so pick one that works for you and aim to refine the process. A few minutes spent adjusting contrast, colour channels and dodging and burning can turn a flat monochrome into a bold black & white.

IMAGE: JORDAN BUTTERS



94 Raw file recovery

A big benefit of shooting in Raw is the leniency of the resulting files. Why not revisit a Raw file and see what you can save? In Adobe Camera Raw the Exposure, Highlights, Shadows, Blacks and Whites sliders can be used to recover at least one stop of overexposure and several stops of underexposure.



95 Build upon plug-ins

Anything that saves time whilst editing can only be a good thing, right? There are a huge number of presets and plug-ins available for Photoshop, Elements and Lightroom that help you style your images in a single click. Don't just rely on the cookie-cutter solution – use presets as a foundation for your own editing.



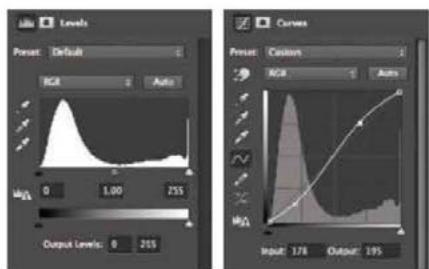
96 Cross-processing

A throwback from film, whereby the wrong chemical was deliberately used to process the film. The cross-processed look has become popular of late and can be created by adding blues to the shadows and yellows to the highlights in your image. We covered the technique in detail back in issue 75.

**97*****Basic retouching***

Fixing blotches and blemishes while retaining skin texture is a fine art, which is why the top portrait retouchers earn a good living from their craft! Aim to learn one new retouching skill per week and you'll quickly gain the know-how to create flawless, natural-looking portraits.

IMAGE: ISTOCK PHOTO

**98 Learn Levels & Curves**

Experiment with Curves and Levels adjustment layers in Photoshop or Elements and take complete control over exposure. Both tools do similar things but while Levels is a simplified method, Curves allows for finer adjustments and more precise control across the shadows, mid-tones and highlights.

**99 Streamline workflow**

Do you dread sorting and editing your images? A good workflow will make the task infinitely more enjoyable. Adobe Lightroom is a good place to start – from there set a designated place into which you import images and another folder to save your processed files. Back up your files to an external hard drive or cloud server.

**100 Dodge & burn**

One of the few processes that has survived the test of time. Rooted in darkroom printing, there are several ways to dodge and burn digitally (see page 44 for one example), but more important than knowing how is knowing where. It can be used to recover highlights, save shadow detail, add depth and create contrast.



**PRO
LANDSCAPE
CHALLENGE**

TRIPODS AT DAWN

WE GAVE TWO OF OUR LONGEST-STANDING CONTRIBUTORS, ROSS HODDINOTT AND HELEN DIXON, THREE CHALLENGES ON THE UK'S SOUTH WEST COAST TO SEE HOW THESE LEADING PROS WOULD HANDLE THEM





1

Ross Hoddinott

Location: Near Bude, north Cornwall
About Ross: Professional landscape and wildlife photographer for 26 years, Nikon Ambassador and author of eight books.



IS IT REALLY 100 issues already? It seems like yesterday that I started contributing to a fresh and exciting photo magazine with its first issue about to hit the newsstand. I feel very fortunate that the editorial team have involved me from day one and proud to have contributed to every issue thus far, so how could I decline their invitation to be involved in these milestone contributor challenges?

Both Helen and I live in the south west, so we both know the area really well. However, with Helen based in west Cornwall and me in the north of the county, I deliberately avoided her turf for these challenges and made a conscious decision to stay in north Cornwall and cross the border into Devon.

1) SHOOT MOVEMENT IN THE LANDSCAPE

When you live so close to a dramatic and wild coastline, the sea makes an obvious choice for capturing movement in the landscape. Deciding on which location to shoot was my biggest dilemma: Trevose, Sandymouth Bay and Boscastle were all on my shortlist. However, with sunset coinciding with high tide, I decided Trebarwith Strand – one of my very favourite Cornish bays – would be the perfect choice for the first challenge.

There are a couple of elevated viewpoints that make it possible to capture the large waves funnelling up between the rocks from a safe distance. It is a great evening location,



3

as you shoot directly towards the setting sun and any afterglow. I know it's a somewhat hackneyed technique but I love capturing blurry water, so rather than attempt to freeze the water's motion, I opted for a slower shutter speed. I didn't want the water to be too smooth and milky, so I avoided using an ND filter and opted for a low ISO rating (ISO 64) in low light with a 0.6ND grad to help balance the sky. Water looks more orderly when it drags back towards the sea, so I triggered the shutter as the waves receded and experimented with the shutter speed. Slightly over a second achieved a nice effect. While fairly content with the images from my first visit to Trebarwith, there was little colour in the sky; I returned the following evening and this time was treated to a wonderful afterglow. Challenge complete!

1&2) Trebarwith Strand is a favourite location of mine for capturing long-exposure landscapes.

3) A lake can be just as photogenic as the coast at sunrise – look for ways to capture reflections and foreground interest.

2) CAPTURE THE GOLDEN HOUR

Living near the sea, it would be so tempting to return to the coast for each and every challenge but, for the sake of variety, I wanted to produce three very different pictures. Having already shot a sunset for my previous challenge, I opted for a sunrise for this one. One of my favourite local spots is a little reservoir called Tamar Lakes – little more than a couple of miles from my home. In average conditions, it is an unspectacular location; however, if there is a veil of mist, mirror-like reflections or a colourful dawn sky, this little lake comes to life. You can never anticipate a great sunrise – you just ➤





1

have to keep getting up early and head out with your camera. Luckily, living so near by meant that I could set my alarm early, look out the window and make a decision based on how the sky was looking. The first few mornings of trying, it was either dull or blustery so I headed back to bed. However, on the morning I took this image, the sky was filling with colour long before sunrise. I hurriedly brushed my teeth, threw some clothes on and drove the short distance to the lake. A good knowledge of local viewpoints is important as a landscape photographer. By visiting somewhere that I already knew well, I had the experience to know where I needed to go to get the

best composition given the sun's position. I headed for an area fringed with reeds to act as interesting foreground as they look striking contrasted against the colourful reflections. I had to work fast – by now, the sky was ablaze with warm colours and conditions like this don't last long. I used a graduated ND filter to balance the light and tried both vertical and horizontal compositions. As you can imagine, a sturdy tripod proved essential to support my Nikon D810 and NIKKOR 17-35mm lens. Before long, the colour was fading and the intensity of the rising sun became too great for my camera. I packed up and headed home feeling pretty satisfied with my morning's efforts!

2



3) SHOOT YOUR FAVOURITE LOCATION

Singling out just one UK location as a favourite is an almost impossible task. There are so many iconic places to shoot, each with their own appeal, character and unique opportunities. My favourite location changes regularly – depending on the season and my mood. However, I have long loved Dartmoor. Ever since I learnt to drive, I've been making the regular pilgrimage, so I decided to complete the challenge by visiting the moors.

Winter is my favourite time to shoot Dartmoor – the light and conditions are often dramatic. Also, during winter, the moors are prone to a dusting of snow. Great Staple Tor is one of my favourite spots and with snow forecast overnight I set my alarm for 5am, dressed up warm and carefully drove up to the moors. The ascent up to Great Staple took me a little under 20 minutes and by the time the sun appeared, I was in position, all set-up and ready to begin. The dusting of snow transformed the scene into a winter wonderland and, while the conditions were freezing, it was a joy to witness and record such beautiful scenery. I located some lovely jagged rocks for the foreground, which balanced nicely with the rock stack beyond. Again, my NIKKOR 17-35mm proved the perfect lens choice, stretching perspective and creating lovely depth. With my fingers going numb, I walked back to the car, content with my images. But how would my shots compare to Helen's?

1&2) Picking my favourite south west location was easier than I thought it would be; I've always had a love affair with Dartmoor since my teens, especially during winter.



3

Helen Dixon

Location: West Cornwall

About Helen: Professional landscape photographer for five years, Helen was first profiled in the magazine's Reader Showcase.



I CUT MY teeth as a professional photographer working with *Digital SLR Photography* in its early days and, I'm amazed to find out that I hold the title for having shot the most cover images, so I feel privileged to be a part of this milestone issue. While the point of this article is to give you some insight into how two professional photographers work differently under similar conditions, I'll admit I'm rather intimidated to be paired with Ross, who is an outstanding **photographer**. Regardless of how I fare, it is a pleasure to be part of the challenge.

1) SHOOT MOVEMENT IN THE LANDSCAPE

Living so close to the coast, my first thoughts for capturing movement was to use the sea, then I remembered that a while back I'd been on Dartmoor and I'd visited a lovely little waterfall that would fit the bill perfectly. It resembles a scene from *Lord of the Rings*, with a journey to match (almost!). It's hidden in a deep wooded valley and the walk down is steep and precarious – almost vertical! The water splits into two as it thunders over the top of a small ravine. Once I had made it down I could see that the water was flowing **faster**, light levels were also lower and I couldn't get as close as I did before.

I wanted to capture movement but not so much that the water was a total **blur**. I knew my Nikon D810 would be capable of capturing the scene without filters, so using manual mode I selected an exposure of two seconds at f/11 (ISO 800). The D810 is an

outstanding camera, especially its high ISO performance. Having bagged the shot it was time to head back – if I thought the trek down was bad, I didn't consider the return journey! This has to be one of the hardest ascents I have endured and all virtually in the dark!

2) CAPTURE THE GOLDEN HOUR

St Michael's Mount – a Jewel in the Cornish crown. It's an iconic location and it's usually on every photographer's to-do list, so I couldn't ignore that, and it happens to be one of my favourite places too! Unfortunately, it's not just a magnet for photographers; it also attracts the crowds. The hotspot is the famous causeway, which leads across to the island at low tide, and not surprisingly features in many images, but I always try to search out a different viewpoint to the **familiar**.

With my location sorted and the incoming tide quickly approaching, making my way across the causeway was also going to be a challenge: the rocks are covered in seaweed and algae and with one wrong move, you'd be on your behind or worse still – your camera takes a dip in the sea! I must admit it had been a bit of a last-minute decision to venture out, so I wasn't as prepared as usual. The weather had been overcast for much of the day and sunset was only 45 minutes away. I knew it would be a race to make it in time, especially as I could now see the sun starting to pop out from behind the clouds. I ran along the beach as fast as 'Usain Bolt' ➡

3) I still explore well-known locations for areas that are a little different, like this waterfall hidden in **Dartmoor**.
4&5) Having used an ND filter to create blur, I realised it wasn't necessary with the dynamic range of the Nikon D810.

4



5





PRO
LANDSCAPE
CHALLENGE





3



2



4

1&2) I was lucky in my final challenge that the cloud broke, giving me these striking shadows. I used an ND filter to lengthen the exposure as I was shooting towards the sun, which also rendered the rough surf smooth and ethereal.

3&4) Rock pools often make good foreground interest and it gave me an alternative composition to capture the popular St Michael's Mount.

(well maybe not quite, but it felt like it) with all my gear strapped to my back, not a very glamorous sight and not a very sensible one either! I finally scrambled to get into position, at the same time gasping for breath, and quickly set up the camera and tripod. My adrenaline was pumping as the sky began to turn golden and I soon forgot about all the antics in getting there! Settings and filters checked, remote release in place, I was ready to go. It was worth the run, too: the next ten minutes undoubtedly provided some of the most beautiful colours I'd seen in a long while! I used my Nikon D810 in manual mode, set to expose for 1.3 seconds at f/13 (ISO 100) with a 0.6ND grad. I captured my favourite shot just as the waves flooded the pools at my feet, forcing me back.

3) SHOOT YOUR FAVOURITE LOCATION

There's one place's beauty that stands out for me – Porthcurno. Many say it looks tropical, in fact I once met a couple of German photographers who said it compared well with Hawaii, who am I to argue? I decided on a high viewpoint for this shot, which is

accessed by taking the coastal path. The benefit of this is that you are almost guaranteed none of the dreaded footprints as the beach is difficult to reach from the cliff. It is also accessible via the main beach on a very low tide but then you have to be careful not to get cut off. Last year I witnessed a couple of stranded people having to be airlifted by a helicopter rescue!

I positioned my camera in portrait format to include some foreground interest and to give a more pleasing balance to the composition, which otherwise may appear too heavy on one side. The sunrise wasn't as good as I'd hoped and I thought that I might have to make a return visit. Thankfully the sun eventually made an appearance above the cloud and, to my delight, the shadows cast by the headland made an unexpected addition to my shot. In manual mode, I used an ND filter and a five second exposure at f/13 to get this image. I also used the NIKKOR 24-70mm f/2.8 as it allowed me to include all the elements I wanted. In situations like this where space is limited, zoom lenses are versatile and this lens performs brilliantly.

PRO CHALLENGE Verdict

For two photographers who live in Cornwall, both shoot with a Nikon D810 outfit and produce stunning images, it's interesting to see how they approach scenes differently. When tasked with capturing motion, it's clear that long exposures are favoured and how remarkable the Nikon D810 performs given that only low density ND grads were used. Cornwall is one of the country's most beloved areas for landscape photography, so seeing the results of their shortlisted locations shows how much potential the area holds. When it comes to finding foreground interest, Ross and Helen utilise subjects most photographers might overlook: reeds and rock pools at sunset and sunrise evidently make glorious images and patience pays as both photographers prove. Waiting for the right light, not going home too early and finding new viewpoints is obviously what sets these two pros apart from the rest.



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Family Album

AS EVERY PARENT with young children will tell you – each is unique. So when shooting siblings of a similar age, it's important to remember that when capturing their portrait. Take Naia and Lola, sisters with two years between them. Both not only look very different, but they also have very different personalities. That's not unusual. Although they're sisters, they're still independent beings with their own nature, habits and behaviour. Whether I'm shooting them together or separately, I think it's important always to remember that they're both individuals, as well as sisters.

Unlike some professional photographers (mainly Stateside), I'm not into the twee thing of dressing them both the same, or asking them to do similar things. I just let them get on and capture the magic in front of me. To do that well, as you'll discover, the secret is to enjoy yourself, interact with the subjects and above all, have fun.

When I first start shooting, the images I'm taking are almost secondary in importance to the relationship I'm building with the subjects. At the start, I'm trying to see how the sisters respond to the camera, how they react to me and how they interact with each other. I'll choose a suitable location where I can get both of them close together so they're more relaxed, then have some fun while taking the pictures.

With Lola and Naia, I sat them in a window bay and let them do their own thing, taking wider shots that include them both and closer crops of each one. The window is an ideal choice as it provided a soft light and I could have the girls look at me or gaze outside, as well as doing silly things like press their faces against the glass. In the first five or ten minutes, I'm working at building a bond, gaining their trust, getting them interested in what we are doing and making them realise that our shoot is going to be lots of fun.

Once I've done this, I'm ready for the real shoot to begin, which normally involves heading outside. Shooting outdoors dramatically increases the potential for great images as you can manipulate the daylight or use flash while taking advantage of the variety of locations outside the home that are sure to keep the children interested. I'll generally look for suitable backgrounds, then start by taking pictures of the two children together, making sure that we're having fun the whole time.

Remember that even though they're together as two, we're shooting them individually as well, an aspect that we must remember throughout the shoot. While the parents are close by, I generally try to keep them some distance away as children always behave differently if parents are too near. On the shoot, I want them to react to me and not the parents as it's the best way to capture the types of pictures that the parents have never been able to.

The sisters may only have a couple of years between them (six and eight), but the difference in photography terms is massive.



1&4) Areas of open shade like huts are great for containing kids within soft light. 2) Being older, Naia took direction well, letting me be more proactive than reactive. 3) The results you get hinge on the experience you give the kids, so make sure you have fun. 5) Look for ways to shoot through objects, be it glass or foliage, to add depth and interest to portraits.

Lola is still a 'baby' as such and still enjoys doing baby things and being silly, so I play on that and also on her natural cheekiness and wit. Naia is only a couple of years older but acts very differently – she wants to be more like a model and you can see she's been practising her poses a little, so you want to show her looking a little older, but you also want to capture her how her parents want to see her still – as their little baby.

With younger children like Lola, you quickly pick up if they're an old six or a young six and you play on this. There's no point asking an 'old six' to stick their tongue out and pull silly faces – I once asked one to and was told that was just stupid! Luckily, Lola was incredibly responsive to my silly suggestions, which really helps me do my job.

As well as temperament, you should look for physical characteristics that you can use. In Lola's case it's her red hair, which always makes for amazing images – it's easier to shoot subjects with red hair as it seems to work with every colour of background.

The focal length of the lens you use can



make a major difference, too: a longer lens like a 70-200mm will flatten features and is a good choice if the subject has a rounder face. I'll generally stick to the 50mm, which I class as an environmental portrait lens, as it includes the subject and their surroundings.

The great thing about kids this age is that they look great no matter where you place them, so don't be overly concerned if you're struggling for locations. You can place a child on a doormat three feet inside their front door and take nice pictures. Start by the front door, then look for backgrounds outside of the home – we were very lucky here in that the family home and garden offer incredible opportunities for great backdrops, but almost everywhere has potential. While weathered paintwork is a favourite with many lifestyle photographers, I love concrete ➤



Brett's kit bag

Canon EOS-1DS Mk III
Canon EF 50mm f/1.2L
Canon EF 70-200mm f/2.8L
Lastolite TriGrip sunfire/soft silver
Calumet Genesis Flash with softbox
Pocket Wizard Plus III triggers
Elinchrom Ranger RX with softbox
Lexar 16GB 300x CF cards



1

– its texture and how light falls on it.

At their Anglesey home, we've various options from the sheltered shade of the blue garden building to white walls and the wonderful garden with its nooks and crannies – all offering great potential.

The easiest way to keep the kids' attention is to be a kid yourself. Liking kids definitely helps! You can't stand over young children like Lola and Naia, so you've got to get to their level, sit or lie on the floor and be prepared to get dirty. Make stupid noises, play on their mentality and figure out psychologically where they're at and work with it. If you lose them, put the camera down and skim stones, have a tea party with the teddies or whatever you need to do until they're ready to be involved again.

Lola's attention span is less, so you have to work with her faster and I felt that I needed to keep talking to her while taking pictures to maintain her interest. With Naia, you could say nothing and she'd just look at you perfectly for hours – that comes from not just their different personalities but also the age difference.

Parents always like pictures that show their kids as young as possible. Parents like taking pictures that show their kids being stupid and funny and just being them. For me, the beauty in a portrait where a child is looking straight at the camera without a smile is something to behold. It's often something that shocks the parent because they weren't expecting it – it's an image that shows a parent how the child will be when they grow up. I generally don't try to force the expressions; I'd rather let them be as natural as possible. When I want something, I'll ask for it, so if I want them smiling or not for a particular shot, I'll ask, but generally I don't interfere in this respect.



2



3

1) Use differential focus for more engaging and interesting compositions. 2&4) Don't restrict yourself to always looking through the viewfinder, set your camera to autofocus and shoot from the hip. 3) Look for the little details to shoot too that show the connection between the siblings.

I'll generally shoot using daylight but I'll always have a couple of flashguns or a portable studioflash kit with me just in case. I'll shoot using ambient light as the main source, with a Lastolite silver-white/gold-white reflector to hand to bounce in some light when needed. If the sky's really cool, I'll look to use flash as I want to make the most of the backdrop for added drama.

The key thing with children this age is that the shoot has to be fun. If you think the kids are losing interest, get them to hold hands and have a little race with you. Then when they turn around and run back, be sure the sun's behind them so that you can take pictures and not waste the moment. Ultimately it's not about the photo shoot – it's about the experience. We're never thanked for a great photo shoot, we get thanked for giving the kids a great day out. The quote that summed up the shoot was from Lola, who when told the pictures were being used in a magazine, said: "What is it for? A magazine about having fun?"

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Q&A: Photograph kids

What advice do you give for those trying to shoot kids for the first time?

If you can't have fun then just forget it. Using flash and cool kit is great and can produce some brilliant images but you have got to start off simple. Start with a fixed lens so that you need to physically get in to the kids' faces to get the images rather than shoot from a distance. Keep it real, keep it simple.

What clothes should they wear?

Pick clothes that suit the surroundings. Here, in this rural surrounding, with the weather being mild to cold, woolly garments were ideal, with the bright colours and woven textures working a treat. Once we've finished one of the sessions, I'll usually get them to change outfits so that there's some variety to the shots. Don't dress them too smartly, if unsure go for bright colours and above all make sure they're comfortable in what they're wearing.

Are there any backgrounds to avoid?

Almost all are suitable. The one background I try to avoid is a mottled backdrop created by light passing through trees as it confuses the viewer's eye. Keep your background in the same light as your subject and you'll find it easier to work with.



"The key thing with children this age is that the shoot has to be fun"

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The Big Interview

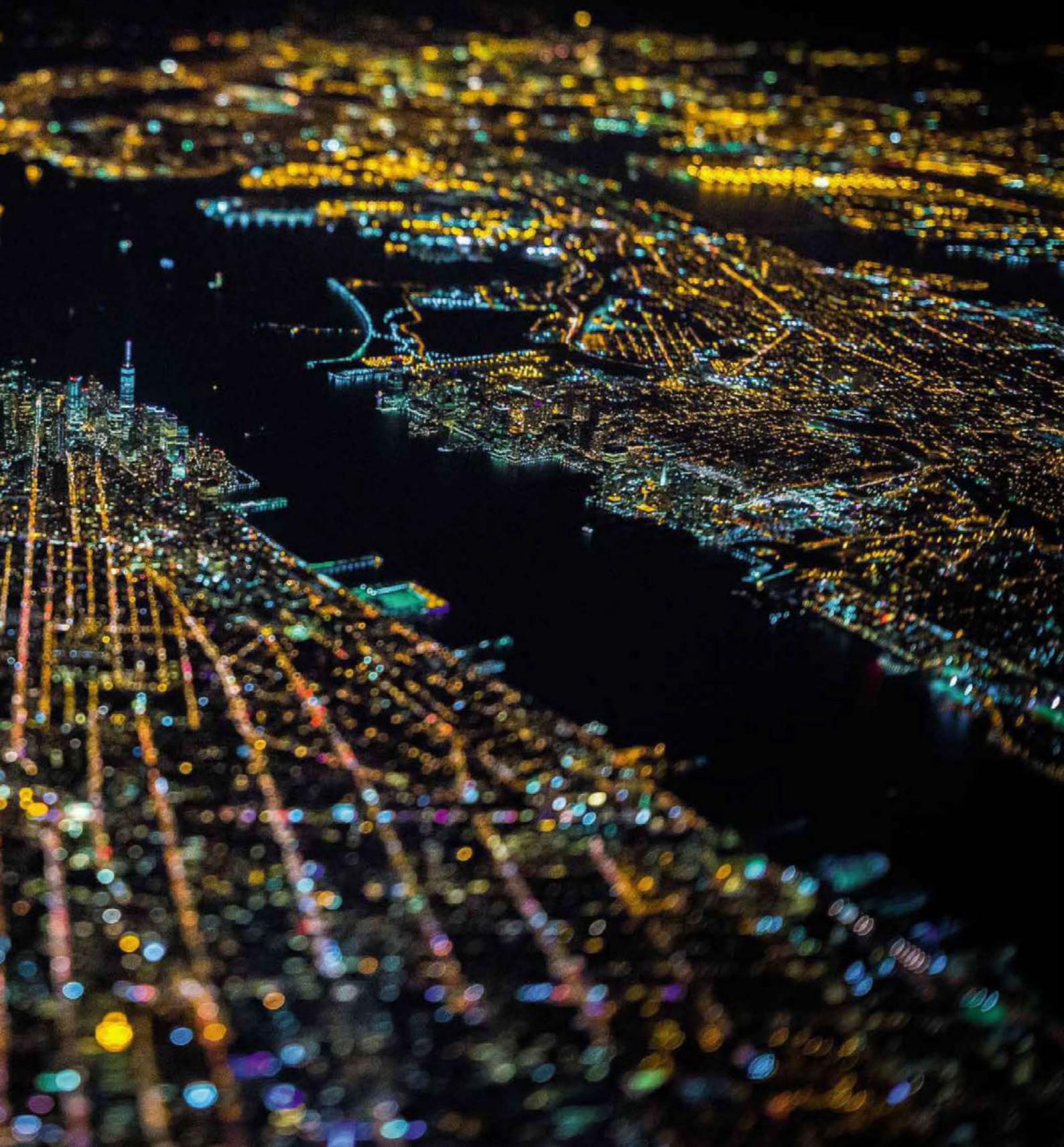
New York

PULITZER-PRIZE WINNING PHOTOGRAPHER VINCENT LAFORET TALKS TO CAROLINE SCHMIDT
ABOUT HIS LATEST SPELLBINDING STILLS PROJECT THAT'S BECOME A SKY-HIGH SUCCESS



New York

Words: CAROLINE SCHMIDT



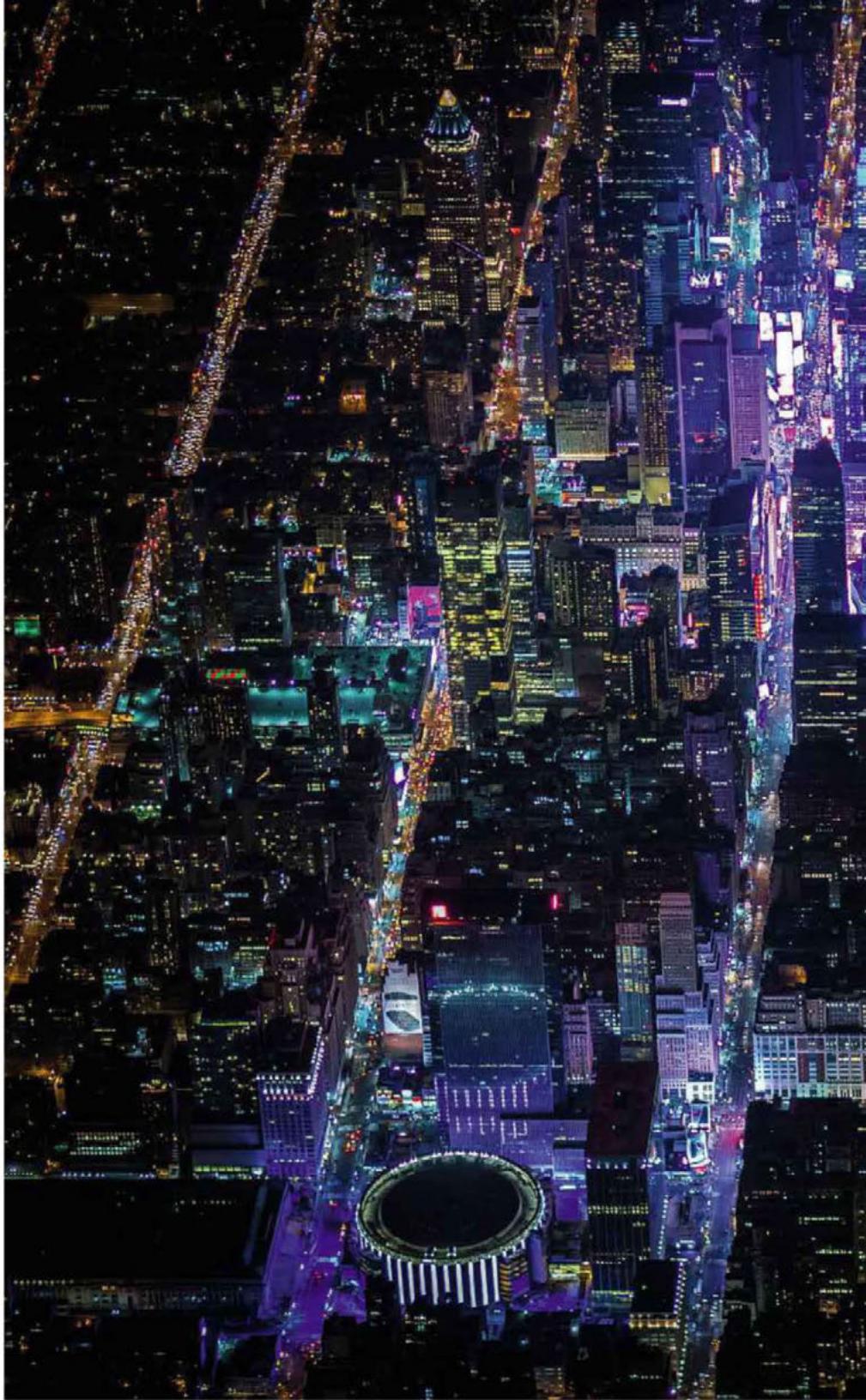
New York City

is unlike any other city in the world: it is a city of continuous ebb and flow, an addictive city of virtual unrest, even in the depths of night. From above, the vibrant streets are buzzing with a system of activity like brain synapses firing neurons; quite apt for photographer Vincent Laforet's latest project 'Night Over' to illustrate an article about male psychology for *Men's Health* magazine.

Taking to the skies to shoot images 7,500ft above New York City at night from an open-sided helicopter demanded technical expertise and top-of-the-range kit, as well as vision, belief and a lot of persuasion to convince the publisher holding the purse strings. Nothing like it had ever been done before, but if anyone could it was Laforet.

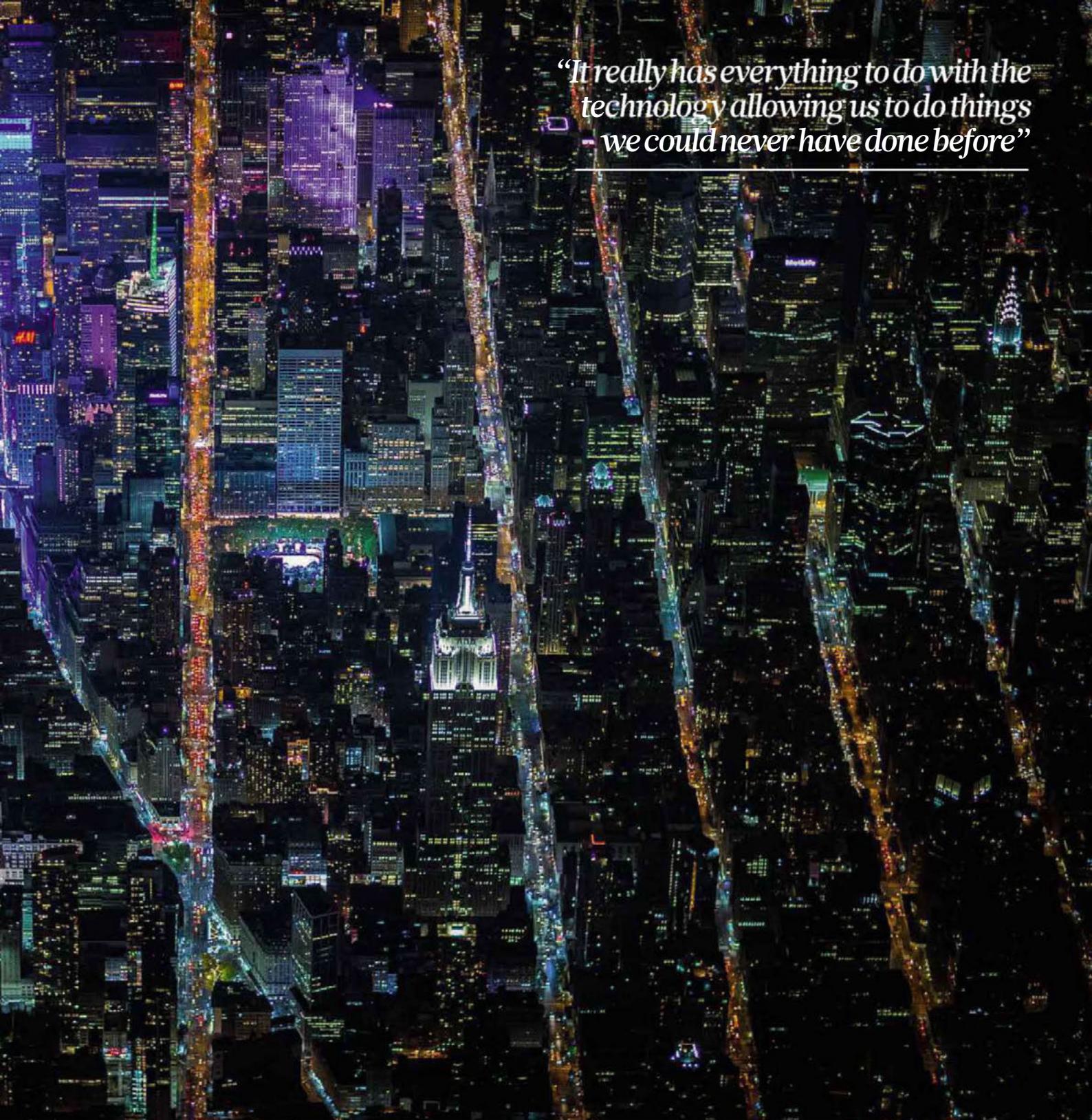
Laforet is one of those people who likes to be the first to try innovative ideas and seemingly does everything well. You know the type – the kind that's inspiring but also makes you feel a little inadequate. He's got a Pulitzer Prize among his laundry list of awards, is a dad of two, a producer, a lecturer, a filmmaker and a pioneer of aerial and tilt-shift photography – long before it became popular. He's even been advisor to companies such as Canon, Adobe and Apple. Born in Switzerland, grown up in France and New York City, Laforet is no stranger to adapting and thriving in new environments. In the days where he mainly shot stills, he's been commissioned by almost every magazine you can think of, from *Vanity Fair* and *National Geographic* to *The New York Times*, shooting news assignments of terrorist attacks, natural disasters and portraits of heads of state. When not on the frontline, he was on the sidelines for *Sports Illustrated* shooting Super Bowls, Olympic Games and the NBA. It's in the sky that Laforet is most comfortable, though, having shot aerial photographs of some of the most beautiful places in the world hundreds of times. However, shooting New York City at night was his long-awaited dream come true: "I've been involved in technology most of my career and I've been waiting dozens of years for digital bodies to reach a point where we could do this. Now was the right time. High ISO performance is the key factor here that produces a clean, usable image. The fact I shot the pictures on a Mamiya 50MP back and a Canon EOS-1DX at ISO 6400 is stunning; previous generation medium-format cameras could barely do anything over ISO 800. That kind of performance on a CMOS sensor too is incredible. It really has everything to do with the technology allowing us to do things we could never have done before."

Flying at such a high altitude in a helicopter meant the vibrations were substantial and in low light surely that's an impossible situation for sharp shots?



"Shutter speeds were slow, ranging from 1/125sec to 1/30sec – definitely what I'd call the no-go area for helicopters; normally you'd want to be using 1/1000sec to be safe, 1/500sec is entering dangerous territory, so we were really playing with fire. If you watch the behind-the-scenes video we did of the shoot (<http://bit.do/DSLRnewyork>) you'll hear me hammering the shutter because I know that two out of three images will be soft. We used a gyro, which helped but only by two stops. That's what living on the edge is about: you understand the limitations of what you're working with and the risks you take, but if you get one that works then it's really spectacular."

Not knowing whether such a shoot could be pulled off, Laforet and his team did one week's preparation with the city's air traffic controllers to get necessary permissions, but having been doing similar flights for over a decade, 'Night Over' was pretty 'turn key' for them. "We're used to landing in a country for a commercial job and going up to that height. You really can't scout much as it's too expensive; you just go up and find your images. It's like scuba diving; it's a journey of discovery. You're never sure you're going to get sharp shots, but that's why we added the gyro. I didn't think we'd get nothing, I knew that we'd get something, but I never thought we'd get ➤



"It really has everything to do with the technology allowing us to do things we could never have done before"



Above: Laforet also did an aerial shoot during the day as part of the project for Men's Health.



Above: Laforet and his team outside their helicopter prior to going up 7,500ft over New York City.



what we ended up with. That surprised even me, and it's always nice to be surprised.

"Every city has a way that it asks to be shot. You have to react and adapt to capture the essence of the city. It's hard to describe with words what you look for in an aerial photograph – it's a reaction to colour, geometry, space and repetition. I'm not sure I'm a believer in talent; I'm a believer in hard work, but I do believe as a photographer you know when an image just lines up, which is probably why I've done well with aerial photography because I see and feel patterns that line up logically."

Laforet used almost every fast Canon and medium-format lens he could on this project, including a few tilt-shift lenses, to ensure he had the perfect lens for the perfect shot. While Laforet admits he does less tilt-shift photography since it became a

You have to react and adapt to capture the essence of the city

mainstream menu option in-camera, it's still one of his favourite things to do and just taking a brief look through his portfolio shows there's few who do it better. While watching the video, we couldn't help but hold our breath as Laforet changes lenses at 7,500ft, but he assures me that an intricate system has been developed over a decade to ensure no lenses are changed outside of the helicopter should anything go wrong.

Laforet is familiar with social media success: he's been known to crash a few websites in his time, including Canon USA,

with his viral video *Reverie*, which was the first widely released 1080p film taken on a Canon EOS 5D Mk II. It got two million hits in its first week, but nothing compares to the global phenomenon of 'Night Over' New York City. "This has just blown everything else out of the water," he says, so it's not surprising that Laforet is now in talks with multiple sponsors for a repeat performance. He's currently trying to get permits for photographing above Hong Kong, Tokyo, Rio de Janeiro, Dubai, Paris and other cities in the States. "We'd like to go to all the major cities around the world in the next year or so. The most surprising thing to me is how it's not just photography enthusiasts who think the images are fantastic; it seems to have universal appeal."

Visit: www.storehouse.co/fromabove/ or to see more of Laforet's work, visit: www.laforetvisuals.com

Vincent Laforet



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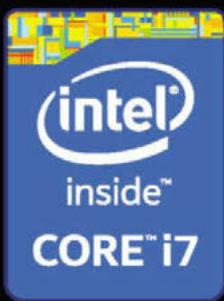
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F/5-6.3 VC USD

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CANON EOS 7D MK II

IS CANON'S LONG-AWAITED UPGRADE TO THE EOS 7D WORTH THE WAIT?
FIND OUT AS WE PUT THE NEW FLAGSHIP APS-C MODEL THROUGH ITS PACES...



Plus

STUDIOFLASH TEST: We try out the best budget studioflash kits under £600 *Page 110*

MINITEST: The Chillblast Fusion Photo OC Lite is a photo-editing mean machine! *Page 117*

New from Nikon

WE HAVE BEEN ANTICIPATING the first new DSLR of 2015, and we didn't have to wait long as Nikon unveiled its first launch of the year. The Nikon D5500, a 24.2-megapixel DSLR is aimed at enthusiast photographers and is Nikon's first DX-format model to feature a vari-angle LCD touchscreen monitor. The new model is very well specified with 39 autofocus points (with nine cross-type sensors), Wi-Fi, 5fps continuous shooting, Full HD 60p video and an ISO range of 100-25600 – all powered by Nikon's EXPEED 4 image processor.

Nikon has also announced two new lenses. The AF-S 55-200mm f/4-5.6G ED VR II is a telephoto zoom lens that offers good reach in a compact barrel. The lens features a retractable design that allows you to collapse the unit down to a slender 83mm long for easy transportation. Also announced is the AF-S 300mm f/4E PF ED VR; Nikon's first F-mount lens to use a Phase Fresnel lens, reducing the number of lens elements required within the lens's design. As a result, the 300mm f/4 weighs 755g, significantly less than its predecessor!

Available in black or red, the D5500 is on sale now for £640 body-only, £720 with AF-S 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6G VR II lens or £900 with AF-S 18-140mm f/3.5-5.6G ED VR. Both lenses are also available to order now with the 55-200mm set at £280 and the 300mm costing around £1,640. www.nikon.co.uk



FUJI BUILDS ON X-SUCCESS

Fuji has kicked the year off with two new models in its X-series line-up. The Fujifilm X-A2 follows on from the success of the X-A1, and is aimed at image-conscious photographers, both in terms of style and features, with a 175° tilting LCD screen and Eye Detection AF mode, which Fuji claims helps you take quality selfies. For those who enjoy capturing the wider world, the X-A2 boasts a 16.3-megapixel APS-C CMOS sensor, EXR Processor II, ISO 200-25600 and advanced AF features such as Auto Macro AF mode. The camera also offers the same popular film simulations that make the X-series a hit, including the new Classic Chrome film preset.

Alongside the X-A2, Fuji also announced the XQ2, a compact that shares much the same spec as its predecessor, the XQ1, with the addition of the Classic Chrome film mode.

Both cameras will be on sale from March, with the X-A2 available in black or brown for £450, including XC 16-50mm Mk II lens. The XQ2 will retail for £330. www.fujifilm.eu



Fuji range expands

Fuji has introduced a new weather-sealed lens to its range of XF glass. The new XF 16-55mm f/2.8 R LM WR is a flagship standard zoom boasting an impressive 17 elements in 12 groups, including three aspherical and three ED glass elements to reduce chromatic aberration. There's also Fuji's unique High Transmittance Electron Beam Coating that is claimed to take care of flare and ghosting. When coupled with the Fujifilm X-T1, the new lens is sealed against the elements, making it water and dust-resistant and ensures efficient operation down to -10°C. The XF 16-55mm f/2.8 R WR is available as of February, priced at £900. www.fujifilm.eu





LUMIX GF7: A SELFIE TOO FAR?

Panasonic's GF-series has long been associated with small and stylish Compact System Cameras and its recently announced GF7 is no different. This petite model does not differ greatly from previous models in terms of specification, with a 16-megapixel sensor, Full HD video and a extensive range of modes. With 'selfies' being the photo buzzword of the masses, Panasonic has delivered a model that is targeted at the selfie-snapper, its LCD touchscreen monitor tilts 180° so it's facing the user and boasts a high-visibility 1,040,000-dot screen to handle bright conditions. Flipped into this position, the camera automatically switches into Self Shot mode. Vanity seems to play a big part in this camera's design, with a Soft Skin function promising smooth skin tones, a Defocusing mode to give an attractive blur effect around the face and a Slimming mode to make the face look thinner. Wi-Fi allows them to share images quickly via social media. If users ever decide to point the camera at something other than themselves, the camera will no doubt perform as well as previous GF-models. The GF7 is available in black or silver with a 12-32mm zoom from March for around £429. www.panasonic.co.uk

NEW
TECH

Canon launches connect and share

Canon has unveiled a photo-storage device that allows you to save, view and share your images wirelessly. The new Connect Station CS100 can store up to 1TB of content, which is loaded onto the device from compatible NFC-enabled Canon cameras and camcorders, or via USB. The content is then accessible via Wi-Fi through your device's web browser. The Canon CS100 is available now, priced at £200. www.canon.co.uk



SAMYANG TELE

Samyang has launched a highly-anticipated telephoto lens for full-frame cameras – the Samyang 135mm f/2 ED UMC. The lens has 11 elements in seven groups and claims vibrant colour and soft bokeh. Given the focal length, this is an attractive proposition for portrait enthusiasts, providing you don't mind focusing manually – there's no AF here. Available now, the Samyang is priced at £420 for Nikon (inc. AE chip), and £390 for Canon, Sony and Pentax. www.syopt.com



A WORLD FIRST!

Ever heard of Venus Optics? Don't worry, us neither! However, it's likely to become more of a household name among photographers after the Chinese lens manufacturer unveiled a new 60mm f/2.8 macro lens that offers a 2:1 magnification ratio – a world first! The VENUS 60mm f/2.8 Ultra-Macro focuses from 18.5mm to infinity and costs just USD\$379 – that's about £250 at last count! We're certainly intrigued! www.venuslens.com



LR MOBILE ON ANDROID

Following its release on iOS last year, Android users have been eagerly awaiting the launch of Lightroom Mobile for their beloved operating system. The wait is finally over, sort of. Adobe has announced the addition of LR Mobile for handsets running Android 4.1 (Jelly Bean) and later. The caveat is that only handsets are covered at preset – that means those of you running Android-powered tablets will need to sit tight a while longer. Head to the Google Play store to download.



CANON EOS 7D MK II

After a lengthy wait, Canon users can finally sink their teeth into the highly-anticipated update for the popular EOS 7D – but is it actually any good?

Test: TOM CALTON

SPECIFICATION

Price: £1,599 (guide price) / £1,599 (street price)
Image Sensor: APS-C CMOS (22.4x15mm)
Resolution: 20.2-megapixels
Maximum image resolution: 5472x3648pixels
AF points: 65 (all cross-type)
ISO range: 100-51200
Shutter speeds: 1/8000sec-30 seconds & Bulb
Continuous frame rate: 10fps
Storage: CF & SD (SDHC/SDXC)
Size: 149x112x78mm
Weight: 910g (including battery & card)

CAST YOUR MIND back to 2009 and you may remember the release of the Canon EOS 7D. At the time this camera was an impressive beast, offering an 18-megapixel APS-C sized sensor, rapid 8fps burst shooting and HD video recording, which comfortably placed it at the top of Canon's APS-C DSLR range. Five years later, and much to the relief of EOS 7D fans, Canon has finally released its successor – the EOS 7D Mk II. With a lengthy gap between models, it's no surprise that some significant upgrades have been added in an attempt to bring it up to speed with its current competitors. But will the Mk II make as memorable a mark as its forebear?

From the front, not much has changed on the Mk II in terms of design, besides a shiny new badge. The nip and tuck really starts to show once you turn the camera around, with a number of buttons and dials having been modernised and repositioned in an attempt to improve handling. The result is that the back of the EOS 7D Mk II now appears much more refined, in fact, the layout is now almost identical to that of the EOS 5D Mk III.

Picking up the EOS 7D Mk II for the first time you immediately notice that it's a hefty piece of kit for an APS-C model, weighing in at 910g, body-only. To put this in to some perspective, its full-frame sibling, the EOS 5D Mk III is 50g lighter (860g, body-only)! This works in its favour though as its added bulk makes it feel pleasingly solid in the hand, and I suspect the weight increase has something to do with the EOS 7D's significantly upgraded dust and weather sealing.

Dominating the camera's rear is a 3in, 1.04-million-dot LCD screen that's fixed to the body. Although there's no fancy tilt/flip or touch-screen action to be had, the monitor itself looks incredibly crisp and



vibrant, which makes it ideal for reviewing your images and video.

Directly above the LCD is the optical viewfinder which, like its predecessor, offers a full 100% field-of-view, letting you see everything the sensor sees without any cropped edges. Once you delve in to the settings you quickly realise there's more to the viewfinder than meets the eye. Hidden within the settings menu is a new Viewfinder Display option that allows you to add or remove additional information from the viewfinder. Such features includes a grid display to help you with composition, as well as a digital spirit level for keeping your shots straight on both the horizontal and vertical axis – nice!

As you'd expect from a Canon DSLR, the EOS 7D Mk II has a chunky handgrip with a rubberised texture that wraps around to the rear thumb rest, for added purchase. Similar to the EOS 5D Mk III, there's a built-in panel to the side of the grip that slides open to reveal dual memory card slots – one for CF and the other for SD.

There are two main command dials – one positioned on a chamfered ridge aloft the grip, whilst the other encircles the SET button on the rear – both are within comfortable reach of the index finger and thumb. On the top left corner of the camera you'll find the AF point selection button that allows you to quickly adjust the active AF point using the joystick-style control. Positioned around the edge of this joystick is a brand new lever, which can be used to quickly cycle through the various shooting parameters. In practice I found this most useful for switching between AF point selection options, especially whilst looking through the viewfinder as it removes the need for you to take your eye away from the

(Above) The EOS 7D Mk II offers new features and a familiar face. Users of the original EOS 7D will instantly feel at home. (Right) Colours are rendered well and the EOS 7D Mk II produces consistent, accurate White Balance settings.

camera to alter these settings, as was the case on the previous model.

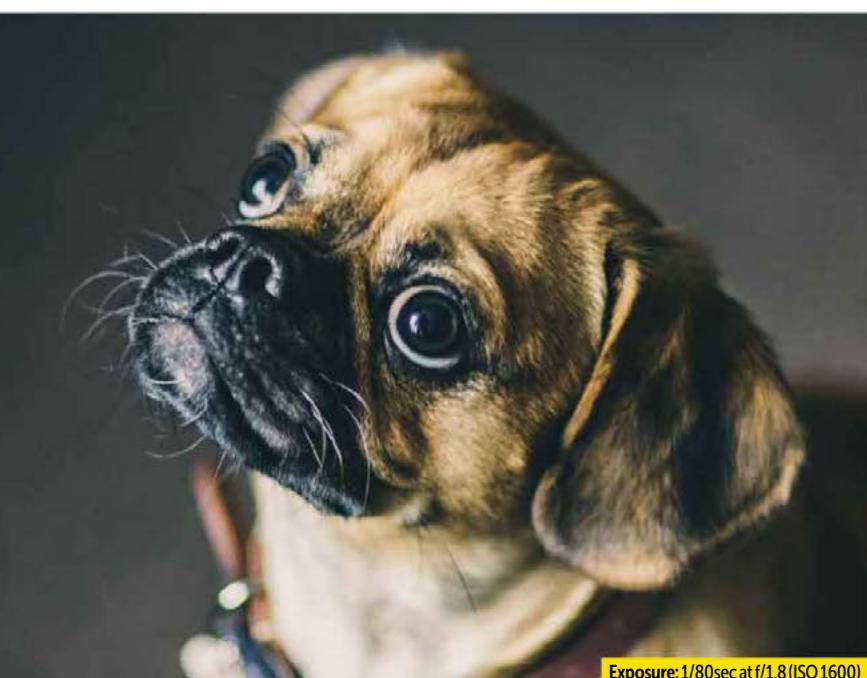
Although the adjustments Canon have made to the outside of the EOS 7D Mk II have been fairly reserved, on the inside the improvements are rather more dramatic. To start with it has gained an extra two megapixels, taking it from 18 to 20. The APS-C-sized CMOS chip now works alongside dual DIGIC 6 processors, which offer a native ISO range of 100 to 16000, further expandable to 51200. There's also built-in GPS for geotagging purposes.

Arguably one of the most impressive improvements made to the new model is the continuous burst shutter speed, which has been further increased from an already quick fire 8fps to a lightning-fast 10fps. To help better accommodate for this increase, the EOS 7D Mk II's buffer depth has also received an overhaul and can now cope with up to 1,090 JPEG images, or around 30 Raw images before starting to fatigue. This combination of speed and buffer depth is enough to make any sports or wildlife photographer salivate.

Further adding to the list of improvements, the autofocus system has had a much needed overhaul in order to bring it up to speed with the latest technology. It now features a total of 65 AF points, which is a significant increase from the 19 AF points found on the Canon EOS 7D. It's worth mentioning also that all of the points are of the cross-type variety, apart from the centre



Exposure: 1/1250sec at f/1.8 (ISO 200)



Exposure: 1/80sec at f/1.8 (ISO 1600)

point, which is an even more accurate dual cross-type. Looking through the viewfinder, the AF points have been distributed across the frame in a large diamond formation, with the left- and right-most points almost touching the sides of the finder. In the field I found this especially useful when trying to compose a shot using the rule-of-thirds as it meant I could focus on the subject with an AF point without having to recompose.

Aside from additional AF points, the EOS 7D Mk II has also adopted Intelligent Tracking and Recognition, lifted from the likes of the Canon EOS-1DX. This feature enables the camera to recognise subjects using face and colour detection, as well as allowing you to track them using all of the 65 AF points. During testing, this system worked incredibly well and was able to keep sharp focus on most fast moving subjects – teamed with the 10fps burst shooting, it's a winning combination.

Not surprisingly, with this top AF performance, the Mk II took shooting stationary subjects in its stride too and was able to achieve sharp focus quickly and quietly, only slowing slightly when faced with low-light or low contrast situations, which is to be expected.

Looking at my test shots taken with the EOS 7D Mk II, I was impressed with the amount of detail captured by the APS-C sensor. The colours remain true to life, whilst the Automatic White Balance did a consistent job at keeping skin tones looking natural. ISO performance was also par for the course, with digital noise only creeping in around the ISO 3200 mark. At ISO 6400 I saw evidence of coloured speckling in the darkest tones of the image, though this was nothing unusual and it produced usable results up to ISO 12800. Beyond this coloured noise starts to litter the images, so only use the higher values in an emergency.

HD VIDEO RECORDING

The original EOS 7D was well known with videographers for its HD video modes, so Canon has updated the Mk II's video settings to include a plethora of new advanced features. This includes the ability to shoot in Full HD at 1080p or 720p and up to 60p, which enables videographers to create slow motion video at full resolution. On the side of the EOS 7D Mk II there's a mini HDMI port for recording uncompressed video to an external recorder, whilst dedicated stereo microphone and headphone jack inputs are ideal for recording and monitoring audio in real-time. There's also a silent control feature that allows users to alter the audio levels during recording whilst helping to prevent accidental mechanical button noises being captured in your footage.

CLOSEST RIVALS

● **CANON EOS 6D:** For £1,299 (body-only), the Canon EOS 6D is £300 cheaper than the EOS 7D Mk II, and has a larger full-frame sensor – albeit with the same 20.2-megapixels. It has built-in Wi-Fi and GPS as well as a larger ISO range (50-102400), although on the downside it has just 11 AF points and 4.5fps shooting.

● **NIKON D7100:** The Nikon D7100 (£768 body-only) is a substantial £831 cheaper than the EOS 7D Mk II and features a 24.3-megapixel APS-C sensor. However, it has less AF points (51, including 15 cross-type), a slower burst rate of 6fps, as well as a smaller ISO range of 100-6400 (expandable up to 25600).

● **SONY A6000:** The Sony A6000 is a CSC that's priced at £499 (body only), making it a whopping £1,101 cheaper. It has a 24.3-megapixel APS-C sensor, 179 AF points and 11fps burst shooting. It also has Wi-Fi and NFC connectivity as well as 1080p HD video recording at up to 60p.

VERDICT

Overall, I'm really impressed with the EOS 7D Mk II and I'd go as far as to say that it's the best APS-C format DSLR from Canon to date. Despite the painfully long wait for the update, it seems to have been well worth it with the Mk II offering a host of impressive new features that'll get both photographers and videographers foaming at the mouth. The only downside is that you'll pay a premium for it. At £1,599 (body-only), it's currently £300 more expensive than its full-frame sibling the EOS 6D (£1,299). That said, if you're looking for a camera that offers rapid burst shooting, lightning quick AF and a host of advanced features to boot, the Canon EOS 7D Mk II ticks all the right boxes.

Handling	19/20
Ease of use	19/20
Features	19/20
Performance	19/20
Value	17/20

Overall **93/100**

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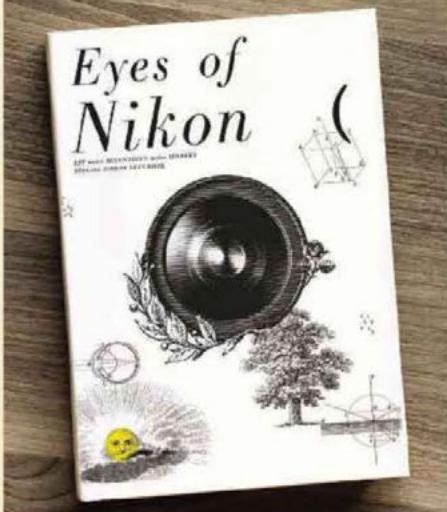
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NIKON S3M HALF-FRAME RANGEFINDER CAMERA + 5CM F/1.4 NIKKOR-SC LENS & S72 MOTOR DRIVE

The Nikon S3M was released in March 1960. It was the last rangefinder camera made by Nikon and it is unique in that it is also the first half-frame Nikon camera ever made. In the early literature it is described as follows: "An S3M camera, specially adapted for 18x24 single frame photography. It takes 72 pictures on a standard 36-exposure 35mm roll film. The viewfinder provides correct viewing field for 35mm, 50mm and 105mm lenses. Other features are the same as the Nikon S3. The S3M is equipped with an (S72) electric motor drive taking single, 2, 3 or burst exposures up to 72 frames at the rate of 4 per second." The 'M' designation meant that it was designed for motorised use. The viewfinder of the S3M is unique to this model. Each etched frame line is keyed individually by sliding the chrome lever on the back of the camera next to the viewfinder. It is click-stopped for each frame line and the focal length is also visible below the frame. Factory records record that 195 Nikon S3M cameras were produced and apparently the ratio of black to chrome cameras is 50/50. However, not all chrome bodies were drilled to accept a motor drive. Apparently, only about 100 Nikon S3M 'sets' ever existed (S3M plus motor drive). Not only is the S3M the most unique of all rangefinder cameras but also the rarest, and a complete set with a proper motor is even rarer. It is the jewel in the crown of Nikon rangefinder cameras.



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PROFESSIONAL-QUALITY HOME PORTRAITURE IS CHEAPER AND EASIER THAN YOU MIGHT THINK. THESE MAINS-POWERED TWO-HEAD KITS INCLUDE ALL YOU NEED TO GET STARTED. WE TAKE A LOOK AT HOW THEY MEASURE UP

Test: RICHARD HOPKINS

FOR HOME PORTRAITS, proper studio heads beat hotshoe flashguns every which way. They have lots of advantages, such as fast recycling of about one second – and that's surprisingly important; there's a modelling lamp so you can see how the flash effect will look, and learn fast; and you can hammer them all day without overheating or damage. There are also hundreds of professional-grade light modifiers available that fit straight on – from softboxes, to beauty dishes, to snoots. Last but not least, they're cheap – many are less than you'd pay for a top-end flashgun.

Studioflash heads are also powerful, often more powerful than you need so good control of brightness is essential.

An output rating of around 200-400Ws is ideal for solos and couples, and if you need more, for larger groups perhaps, then bumping the ISO one stop has the same effect as doubling the flash power as far as exposure is concerned. You don't need a flash meter – just check the LCD and histogram, with the blinking overexposure warning enabled.

Softboxes or umbrellas? In terms of light quality they're broadly similar, and good for portraits with attractive soft shadows. There are differences of course, but both types are great for newcomers and will set you on the right road. Umbrellas are very easy to put up, and make better use of smaller working spaces as they can be positioned right up against a wall if needs be. Softboxes offer more control with less light 'spill' though the more basic ones included in these kits can be fiddly to put up and take down every time.

Many heads have a built-in radio trigger, and they all have a standard jack socket to take any inexpensive trigger. Some also offer remote power control, though that's more of a luxury than essential.

HOW WE DID THE TESTS

POWER OUTPUT: Manufacturers quote power in Watt-seconds (Ws) but it's only a rough guide as Ws is a measure of power stored in the capacitors, not how much light comes out of the front. We used a standard softbox – a Lastolite 95cm Umbrellabox that can be fitted to any head and is particularly good at collecting all the

light and projecting it in the same way, for comparisons on a level playing field. Brightness was measured at 1.0m distance and is given as an f/number plus a decimal, at ISO 100. For example f/16 +0.5 is exactly half way between f/16 and f/22.

MODELLING LAMP: Tested in the same way as flash output, with readings expressed as EV (Exposure Value) at ISO 100. One EV difference is the same as one stop. In exposure setting terms, 6.0EV equates to camera settings of 1/30sec at f/2.8, ISO 400.

FLASH DURATIONS: Flash durations are hard to measure realistically because of the way brightness of the flash pulse peaks and falls, so the industry uses a 't.5' formula to calculate it. Unfortunately, this overstates the

action-stopping potential compared to real shutter speeds by double or three times! Eg, a claimed 1/1000sec t.5 flash duration freezes movement like a shutter speed around 1/500sec to 1/300sec. We used a fast-spinning disc to compare action-stopping ability directly against real shutter speeds, and it works well.

COLOUR: All the heads were tested for colour accuracy, though details are not included in the reviews. That's because not only were they all very similar, they were also very good. With studio heads, the light always gets very slightly more yellow as power is reduced – but not by much, and a shift of around 500K is typical. That's only really noticeable in a side by side comparison.



KEY FEATURES

- 1) Flash tube:** Often user-replaceable, though they last for tens of thousands of flashes.
- 2) Modelling lamp:** Continuous light bulb that simulates the effect of the flash.
- 3) Modifier fitting:** S-type mount or EL are most popular.
- 4) Modifier lock release:** To remove the light modifier.
- 5) Tilt lock:** For adjusting the head angle and locking securely.
- 6) Universal stand mount:** 5/8in socket and stand spigot.
- 7) Umbrella slot:** To slide in an flash umbrella shaft.
- 8) Optical slave sensor:** Picks up the flash from another head, and fires in sync.
- 9) Slave on/off:** Disables the optical slave.
- 10) Power readout:** Confirms accurate power output.
- 11) Flash power setting:** Adjusts brightness of the flash for correct exposure.
- 12) Modelling lamp brightness:** Manually adjustable or set in proportion to flash brightness.
- 13) Modelling lamp on/off:** Turning the lamp down or off reduces heat build-up.
- 14) Recycle beeper on/off:** Beeper confirms flash is ready, and other functions.
- 15) Radio trigger/remote-control:** Fires flash in sync, often with remote power control, too.
- 16) Sync socket:** Universal 3.5mm jack accepts any radio trigger, or sync lead.
- 17) Mains power and fuse:** Mains cable is usually a three-pin computer-type lead.
- 18) Test firing button:** Just to make sure everything's working.
- 19) Mains power switch:** If all else fails, try switching this on!



AHEAD OF THE REST
We test a selection of the best two-headed studioflash kits available so that you can buy with confidence and know-how.

Bowens Gemini 200Rx twin umbrella kit

Street price: £560

Max power: 200Ws

Recycle time: 0.8 secs full power

Colour balance: 5600K +/- 300K

Flash duration: 1/1450sec (t.5)

Radio trigger: Built-in

Fan cooled: No

Modifier fitting: S-type

Weight: 2.5kg

www.bowensdirect.com

It's the smallest and cheapest in the extensive Bowens range, though the 200Rx kit is still the most expensive here, even with less expensive umbrellas (85cm white, convertible to shoot-through) rather than softboxes. The spec sheet reads well, including radio trigger, the option to plug directly into a battery Travelpak, good quality stands, and a nice case.

There's no cooling fan though. Ample venting should handle 200Ws without overheating – and so it proved. At full power, with modelling lamp on max and an enclosed softbox pointing down (ie, a tough test) it took 508 flashes in 508 seconds before the thermal safety switch cut in. Nobody needs to shoot that fast for that long.



Power is adjusted by a big and accurate dial on the side, measuring a healthy f/11 +0.7 at max (softbox at 1.0m, ISO 100) down to f/2 +0.3. That's the widest range here at 5.4 stops. Recycle is a swift 0.8secs at full power, and even less at lower settings. The modelling lamp measured a bright 7.2EV to 2.4EV, a range of 4.8 stops that closely matches the flash power.

Flash durations are quick, easily the fastest with an estimated 1/1200sec at full power, to 1/800sec at minimum output. That's fast enough to freeze action with a high success rate.

VERDICT

Impressive performance from Bowens with the widest power range, fastest flash duration and brightest modelling lamp. Well worth the extra cost.

Build quality ★★★★★

Features ★★★★★

Performance ★★★★★

Value ★★★★★

Overall ★★★★★



Elinchrom D-Lite RX 2/4 twin umbrella kit

Street price: £530

Max power: 200Ws and 400Ws

Recycle time: 0.9 and 1.5 secs

Colour balance: 5500K claimed

Duration: 1/1200sec & 1/800sec (t.5)

Radio trigger: Built-in

Fan cooled: Yes

Modifier fitting: Elinchrom EL

Weight: 1.3kg and 1.5kg

www.theflashcentre.com

The kit contains both D-Lite 4 (400Ws) and D-Lite 2 (200Ws) heads, one silver and one shoot-through umbrella, quality stands with flip-locks, and Skyport transmitter. Spec includes cooling fan, built-in radio trigger with remote control, and cases.

The plastic bodies are well made: tough, lightweight and compact. Controls are all push-button, with a digital display showing power in very accurate 1/10th-stop increments – or set in third, half or whole stops, if you prefer.

D-Lite 4 output measured a thumping f/16 +0.7 at full power (softbox at 1.0m, ISO 100), reducing to f/4 +0.9 at minimum – a modest range of 3.8 stops. The D-Lite 2 was exactly one-stop lower throughout, as it should be. The D-Lite 4



recycled in 1.3 seconds at full power, the D-Lite 2 in 0.9secs, both knocking those times roughly in half at minimum output.

On both versions, there's full control of the modelling lamp, including a proportional mode. At maximum, it recorded a bright 6.3EV down to 2.5EV minimum – a difference of 3.8EV, exactly matching the flash range.

Flash durations are nifty, with the D-Lite 4 giving an estimated 1/600sec at full power, down to 1/400sec at min. The D-Lite 2's smaller capacitors do slightly better at 1/800sec at max to 1/500sec at min.

VERDICT

High-spec, quality and performance heads, plus entry to Elinchrom's extensive range. Modest power range, so they won't turn down as low.

Build quality ★★★★★

Features ★★★★★

Performance ★★★★★

Value ★★★★★

Overall ★★★★★



iLux Quattro 500Pro twin umbrella kit

Street price: £510

Max power: 500Ws

Recycle time: 0.7 secs full power

Colour balance: 5500K +/- 220K

Flash duration: 1/1800sec (t.5)

Radio trigger: Built-in

Fan cooled: Yes

Modifier fitting: S-type

Weight: 2.4kg

www.ilux-photographic-lighting.co.uk

Rated at a powerful 500Ws, it's big and heavy at 2.4kg – double the lightest heads. Not much of a problem usually, though that's quite a weight to hang from a boom arm. Fully featured with built-in radio trigger and remote power control, this kit comes with two 95cm shoot-through umbrellas, excellent heavy-duty stands, and a neat trigger unit. The heads are solidly made and well finished, and a nice feature is the stand mount with pan-tilt handle.

The control panel is clear and simple, with power set on the large knob, lightly clicked at accurate 1/10th stop increments, confirmed by a large digital readout. Max power measured a hefty f/16 +0.7 (softbox at 1.0m, ISO 100) making iLux the joint most powerful with



Elinchrom, turning down to f/2.8 +0.5 at minimum output – a good range of 5.2 stops. The modelling lamp is also very bright at 7.1EV, though it only turns down to 5.2EV, giving a modest range of 1.9 stops and so not able to stay in proportion to the flash at lower settings.

Recycling is fast, measuring 0.7secs at full power and almost instantaneous at low settings. Flash durations are average for this class, with an estimated 1/600sec at max, holding fairly close to that through mid-range outputs, before falling to a lengthy 1/200sec at minimum power.

VERDICT

High performance with plenty of power, wide adjustment range, fast recycling and bright modelling lamp. Flash durations can get a bit long.

Build quality ★★★★★

Features ★★★★★

Performance ★★★★

Value ★★★★

Overall ★★★★★



Interfit EX400Ti twin softbox kit

Street price: £450

Max power: 400Ws

Recycle time: 0.9 secs full power

Colour balance: 5600K claimed

Flash duration: Not given

Radio trigger: Built-in

Fan cooled: Yes

Modifier fitting: Elinchrom EL

Weight: 2.1kg

www.interfitphotographic.com



Interfit offers a wide range of entry-level studio outfits, with this EX400 Ti kit sitting near the top. There's plenty of poke with a fan-cooled 400Ws, built-in radio trigger and remote power control, good quality stands, two large 100cm-square softboxes, transmitter, and carry-case. Build quality is pretty good, better than some past examples from Interfit, though the transmitter unit isn't as well finished.

There's a comprehensive suite of nicely laid out push-button controls, with a digital output display, adjustable in accurate 1/10th stops. Maximum power measured f/16 +0.3 (softbox at 1.0m, ISO 100), down to f/4 +0.1, for a pretty good range of 4.2 stops. At higher power, flash output is very consistent,

but at minimum power it's prone to fluctuate by around 1/10th of a stop, sometimes varying by up to 0.4 stops, which is quite noticeable. Most studio heads do this at their lowest settings, though these suffered more than most.

Recycle time is a nippy 0.9secs at full power, and 0.6secs at min. The modelling lamp is bright at 6.3EV, only turning down to 4.4EV though – a modest range of 1.9 stops. Flash durations are a bit longer than average for this class, estimated at 1/400sec at full power, down to 1/250sec at minimum output.

VERDICT

Good performance, if not outstanding in this company – though nothing else can match the beautiful light from the large 100x100cm softboxes.

Build quality ★★★★

Features ★★★★

Performance ★★★★

Value ★★★★

Overall ★★★★★



Lastolite Lumen8 F400 twin softbox kit

Street price: £550

Max power: 400Ws

Recycle time: 1.7 secs full power

Colour balance: 5300-5600K

Flash duration: 1/1700sec (t.5)

Radio trigger: Extra cost

Fan cooled: No

Modifier fitting: S-type

Weight: 2.5kg

www.theflashcentre.com

Quite big and **heavy**, and promising a 400Ws punch, the Lumen8 F400 kit comes with two medium-size 70cm softboxes, two stands (of rather disappointing quality) and two carry bags, though there's no trigger supplied, and no cooling fan. The handbook warns against overheating, though when tested with both the flash and modelling lamp on max, fitted with a softbox pointed downwards, we managed an ample 258 flashes in rapid succession before tripping the thermal cut-out.

The control panel has a line of nice mode switches and a large knob for power marked down to 1/32nd output, though it's far from accurate. Maximum power checked out at f/11 +0.8 (softbox at 1.0m, ISO 100) which is a bit low for 400Ws, down to f/2.8 +0.3 at minimum,

a range of 4.5 stops. The modelling lamp is not very bright at **4.7EV**, and only dials down to **2.7EV**, a range of 2.0 stops.

Recycling is fairly slow, taking 1.8 seconds at full power, though that's probably quick enough for most purposes and it's much faster at lower outputs. The modelling lamp goes off during recycling (despite what the handbook says) which is supposed to be helpful, but it's a definite hindrance when working at full power.

Flash durations are frustratingly long, estimated at a leisurely 1/350sec at full power, right down to a lengthy 1/200sec at minimum.

VERDICT

Lumen8 F400 is a decent enough head and capable of excellent results, but standards are high in this review and there are better value options.

Build quality ★★★★

Features ★★★★

Performance ★★★★

Value ★★★★

Overall ★★★★



Lencarta Smartflash-2 twin softbox kit

Street price: £340

Max power: 200Ws

Recycle time: 0.9 secs full power

Colour balance: 5300-5500K

Flash duration: 1/2700sec (t.5)

Radio trigger: Supplied

Fan cooled: Yes

Modifier fitting: S-type

Weight: 1.7kg

www.lencarta.com

Lencarta sells direct for keener prices, like only £340 for this twin-head kit with smallish 60cm softboxes, quality stands and radio trigger (but carry case extra). There's also an upgrade service, so you could swap the kit softboxes for the excellent Profold versions with their quick and easy push-up mechanism, while keeping the kit discount.

The Smartflash-2 is smaller and lighter than most, but punches above its weight. It's well specified, including a cooling fan and remote control that plugs into a USB port on the side for both triggering and power adjustment. The controls are spot on – buttons for modes and knobs for power, so you can either use the digital display or count the clicks.

Power is generous for 200Ws, hitting f/16 exactly at max (softbox at 1.0m, ISO 100) down to f/2.8 +0.2, a good range of 4.8 stops. The modelling lamp is controlled independently and is bright at **7.0EV**, but only turns down 2.7 stops to

4.3EV so can't stay proportional to the flash at lower outputs. It also dims momentarily during recycling, which can distract, but fortunately the recycle times are short at 0.9secs on full power, and less at lower settings.

Flash durations are faster than usual, with an estimated 1/900sec at full power, down to 1/600sec at min.

VERDICT

Good spec, compact and light, well designed and made, with high performance at a great price. Faster than average flash durations are a bonus.

Build quality ★★★★★

Features ★★★★★

Performance ★★★★★

Value ★★★★★

Overall ★★★★★



Metz Mecastudio BL400 twin softbox kit

Street price: £500

Max power: 400Ws

Recycle time: 1.9 secs full power

Colour balance: 5500-6000K

Flash duration: 1/700sec (t.5)

Radio trigger: Extra cost

Fan cooled: No

Modifier fitting: S-type

Weight: 1.2kg

www.metzflash.co.uk

Very small and light, the Mecastudio BL400 packs a meaty 400Ws of power. It comes with two smallish 70x50cm softboxes and lightweight stands, plus carry case. There's no trigger supplied, and the heads are not fan cooled, though it took 182 continuous full-power flashes to trip the thermal cut-out (with modelling light on max, softbox pointing downwards). It's ready to go again after about five minutes, so unlikely to be much of a problem.

The minimalist control panel actually has everything you need, with the mains lead, sync socket and on-off switch tucked away underneath. There are push-buttons for everything and a large digital readout for power, set in accurate 1/10th stop increments. Maximum output measured f/16 +0.4, very much

on-par for 400Ws, turning down to f/2.8 +0.4 to give a decent range of 5.0 stops.

The modelling lamp is adjusted independently and has several control options. It's not very bright, recording only 4.5EV at full power which is a couple of stops less than most, and it turns right down to barely a glow at the minimum setting.

At full power, recycling times are slow at 2.2 seconds, improving to one second at quarter power, which is probably around where it will get most used. Flash durations are also on the slow side, estimated at 1/500sec at full power, down to 1/200sec at minimum.

VERDICT

The Metz Mecastudio BL400 falls into a common trap – very capable of excellent results, but out-performed by some, and beaten on price by others.

Build quality ★★★★

Features ★★★★

Performance ★★★★

Value ★★★★

Overall ★★★★



CONCLUSION

We have a winner: the Best Buy is Lencarta's Smartflash-2, with twin softboxes and neat radio trigger/remote control unit. It's quality built, light and quite small, though the specification and performance are big, with ample power for most things, spread over a good range. The modelling lamp is bright, it recycles fast, and flash durations are usefully quicker than average. Best of all is the price – it's fantastic value at £340. The softboxes are a bit small, but you can use Lencarta's upgrade service to swap those out for something better, and just pay the difference.

Three runners-up come Highly Rated. The Bowens 200Rx kit with twin umbrellas performs very well indeed (even without a cooling fan) though it's also the most expensive outfit on test at £560. Its stand-out feature is the shorter flash durations, faster even than the Lencarta, and just about quick enough to freeze active kids jumping around. If that appeals, the extra cost is worth it.

It's no surprise to see Elinchrom's D-Lites on the short-list, in the D-Lite 2 and 4 kit with twin umbrellas at £530. Compact and light, they're a quality act with high performance all round (though a slightly wider range of power would be handy).

The iLux Quattro 500 Pro also comes Highly Rated as a twin umbrella kit for £510, and takes the crown for most power output. It's fairly big and heavy, though well spec'd and nicely finished, while putting on a very classy show, if fast flash durations are not a priority.



Bowens Gemini 200Rx



iLux Quattro 500Pro



Elinchrom D-Lite RX 2/4



Lencarta Smartflash-2

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Test: RICHARD HOPKINS

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www.chillblast.com

IS THIS THE best photo editing computer that you can buy? Well, no actually. But that's considering Chillblast's top model costs a jaw-dropping £13,000. But for a tenth of that price, £1,099 to be exact, the Chillblast Fusion Photo OC Lite is probably the best package out there for high performance at an affordable price.

Chillblast is a specialist builder of custom PCs, winner of many industry awards, and is particularly well known for over-clocked processing chips to extract maximum performance, with warranty-backed reliability. Chillblast's other skill is building PCs with carefully matched components, selected according to task, such as gaming, music production or photo editing. Gamers

for example, need stacks of expensive graphics power but are not so demanding in other areas, whereas photographers are almost the opposite. With Photoshop and Lightroom, there's less pressure on the graphics side but high demand for sheer processing speed using lots of RAM, and with high megapixel cameras some quite normal editing actions build up to generate heavy workloads. Photographers also create lots of image data that needs big capacity storage and secure back-up.

At the heart of the Photo OC Lite is Intel's fastest i7 quad-core chip, over-clocked by 10% to 4.4GHz and liquid-cooled for safety. There's 16GB of RAM and a 128GB solid-state drive to further speed things along, plus twinned 1TB hard drives in RAID-1 configuration. RAID-1 is a key feature for photographers, with the two hard drives mirroring each other, duplicating everything as you go and creating an instant back-up. If disaster strikes, it has the major advantage of automatic recovery, so you can continue working using the undamaged hard drive. With memory so cheap these days, all photo editing PCs should have RAID-1.

In addition, there's a built-in multi-card reader, Blu-ray rewriter, and more USB ports than you can shake a memory stick at. In a nutshell, performance outpaces the highest

spec Apple iMac, that some might say sets the gold standard, yet a system based around the Photo OC Lite is way cheaper – hundreds of pounds less.

All PCs are built to order and Chillblast offers a wide range of upgraded components to suit personal needs, from additional RAM and more powerful graphics cards, to bigger hard drives and whisper-quiet cases. Chillblast welcomes customers to call and discuss modifications too. All machines are tested at full load for 24hrs, and have a warranty – two years on everything plus three more labour-only.

VERDICT

The key to iMac-beating speed and price is carefully matched components, expertly chosen to put power where it's needed for optimum photo-editing performance. The Chillblast Fusion Photo OC Lite is specified to perfection and promises excellent reliability, with extensive warranty.

Build quality	★★★★★
Features	★★★★★
Performance	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Overall	★★★★★

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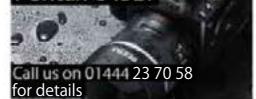
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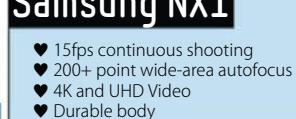
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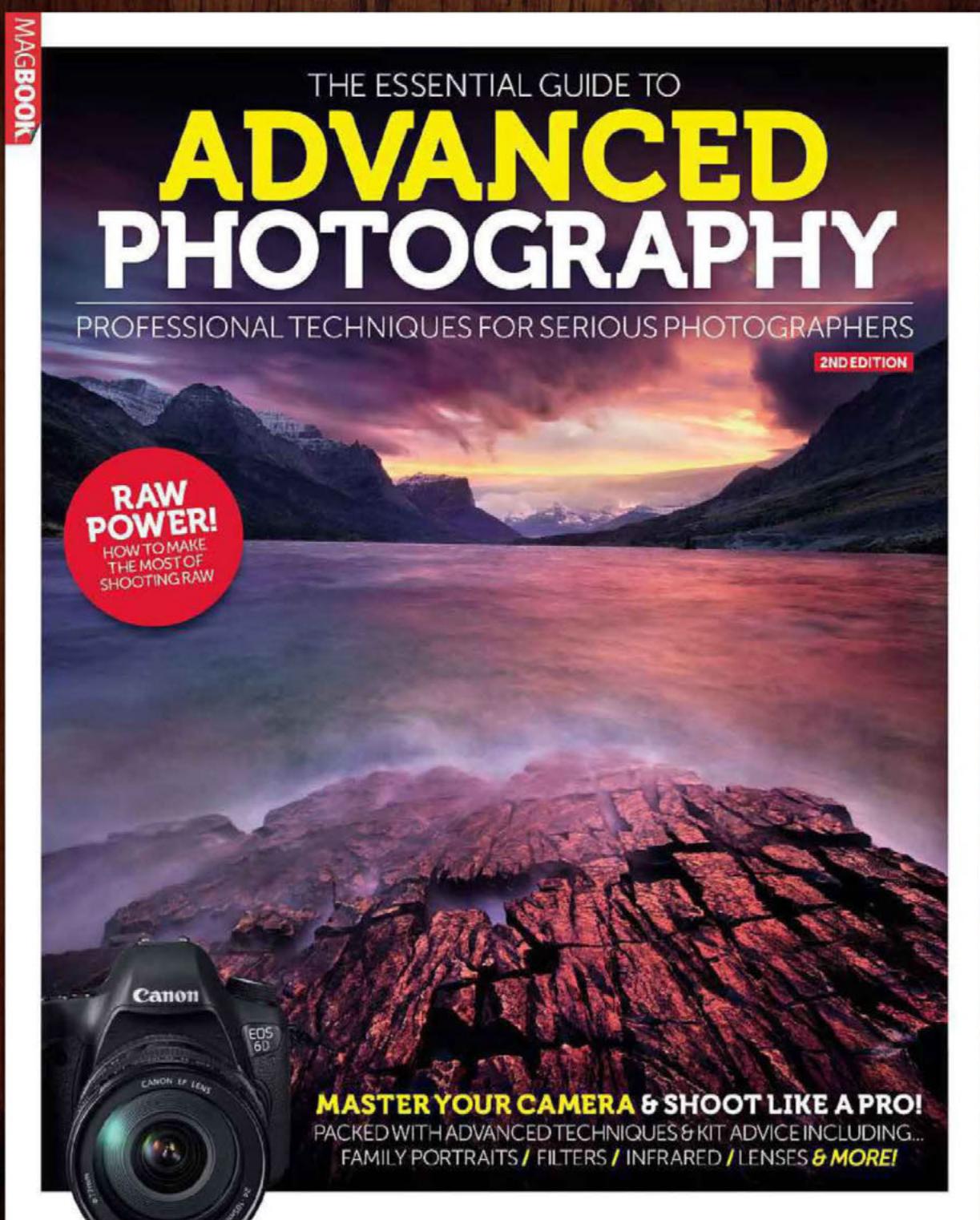
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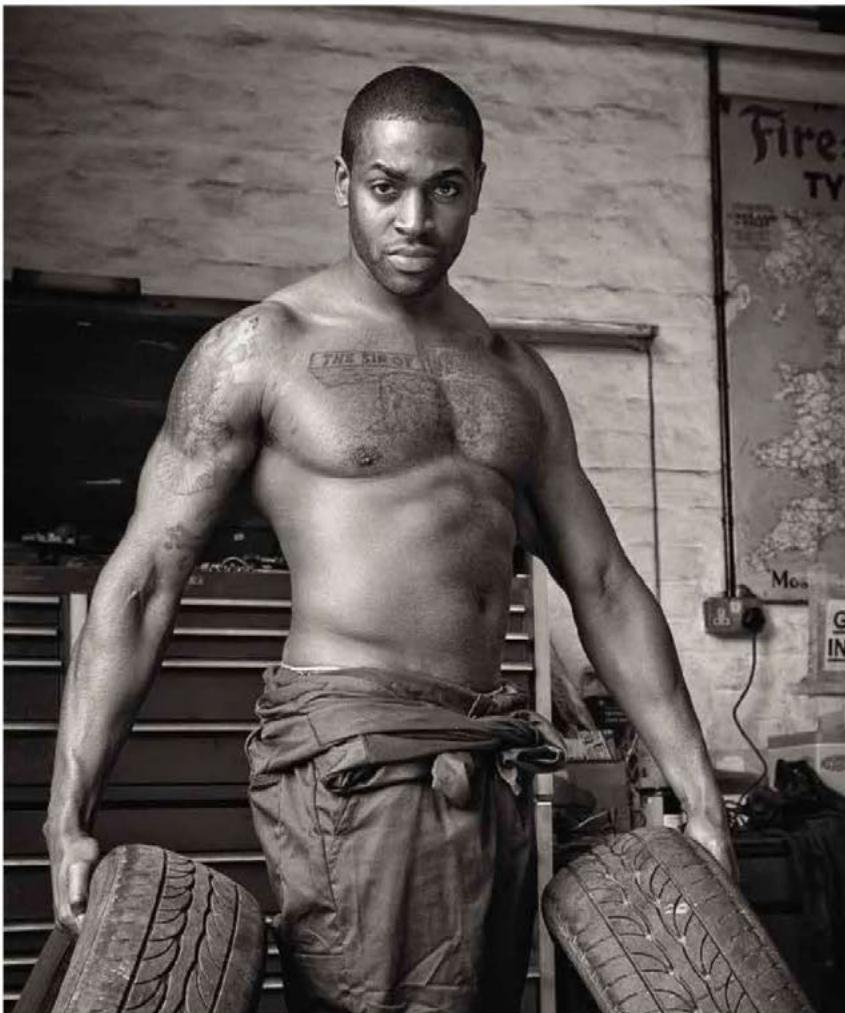
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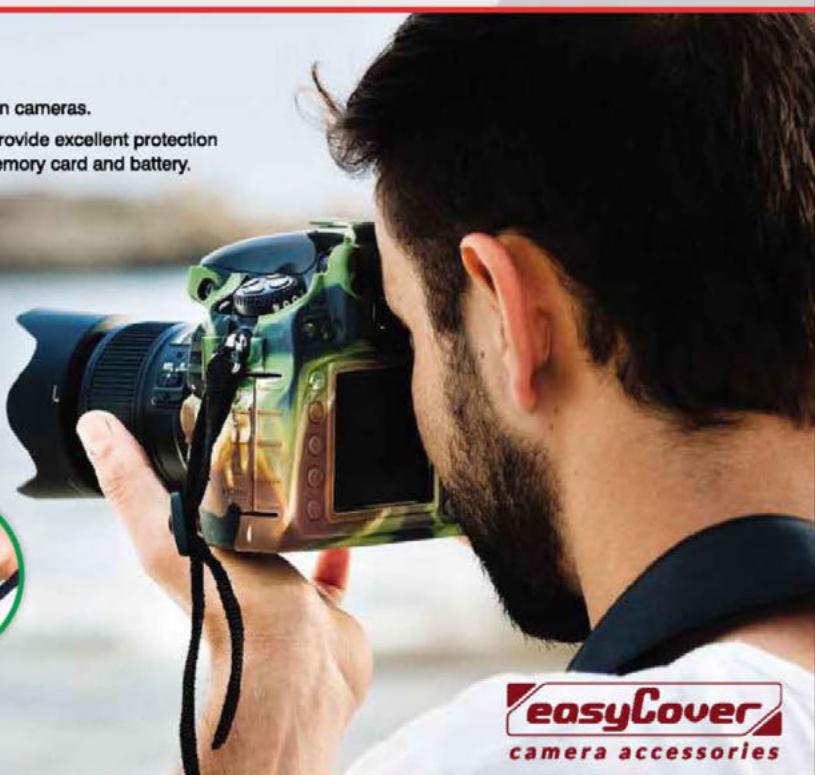
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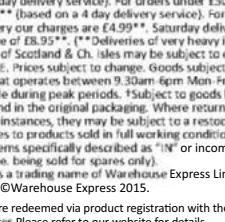
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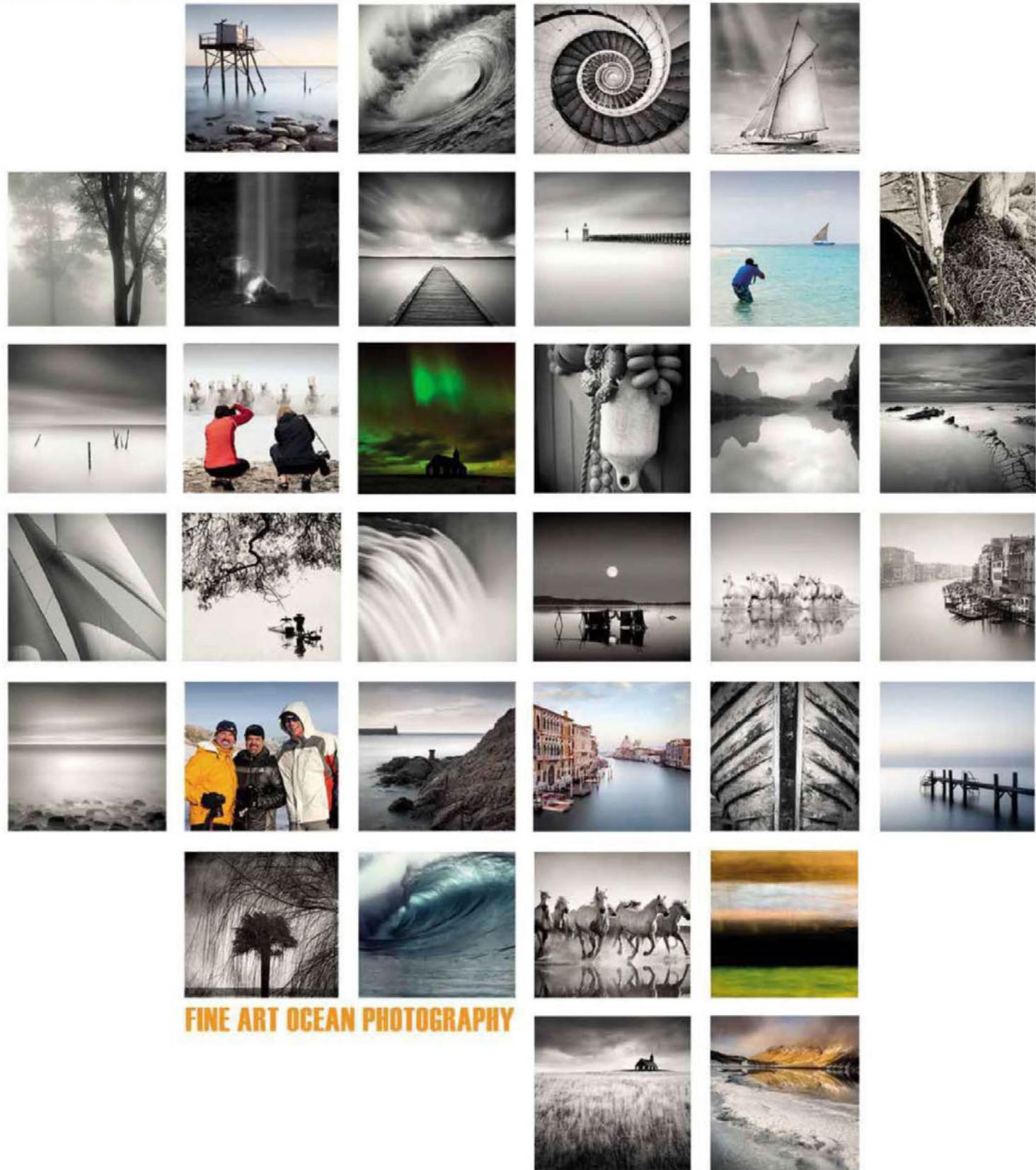
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TUTORIALS



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MAGBOOK

MagBooks cover a range of topics, from IT to Motoring, and Fitness to Lifestyle



**500
ITEMS
IN STOCK**

ACCESSORIES

Ball Head Heaven – set the preferred friction and lock in place. Once the desired friction is set the camera can be moved by a little extra pressure in any direction and from horizontal to vertical. The friction resistance remains constant, reliable and smooth and will not let the camera move on its own. It is oh, so easy.

STEPPING RINGS

**212
ITEMS
IN STOCK**



Ball Head Heaven – set the preferred friction and lock in place. Once the desired friction is set the camera can be moved by a little extra pressure in any direction and from horizontal to vertical. The friction resistance remains constant, reliable and smooth and will not let the camera move on its own. It is oh, so easy.

VIDEO

**50
ITEMS
IN STOCK**

Ball Head Heaven – set the preferred friction and lock in place. Once the desired friction is set the camera can be moved by a little extra pressure in any direction and from to use



**46
ITEMS
IN STOCK**

STUDIO

Ball Head Heaven – set the preferred friction and lock in place. Once the desired friction is set the camera can be moved by a little extra pressure in any direction and from horizontal to vertical. The friction resistance remains constant, reliable and smooth and will not let the camera move on its own. It is oh, so easy to use

WORLDWIDE SHIPPING TO RESELLERS



KOOD SUPPLIES EVERY PART OF THE PHOTO TRADE - HOME AND EXPORT.
EMAIL: info@koodinternational.com FOR DETAILS OF STOCKIST IN YOUR AREA OR, IF YOU ARE A CAMERA EQUIPMENT TRADER,
SEND YOUR DETAILS FOR ACCOUNT APPLICATION AND TRADE SUPPLY PRICES

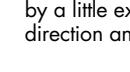
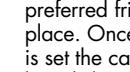
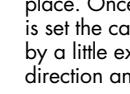


**81
ITEMS
IN STOCK**

BATTERIES

Ball Head Heaven – set the preferred friction and lock in place. Once the desired friction is set the camera can be moved by a little extra pressure in any direction and from horizontal to vertical. The friction resistance remains constant, reliable and smooth and will not let the camera move on its own. It is oh, so easy.

**781
ITEMS
IN STOCK**



KOOD

DSLR RIGS & STEADY CAMERA DEVICES

KOOD RIG 3 SET

A complete set, with all necessary accessories and alternatives included and the most professional Matte Box 2 - KRL03 Supplied in Alloy Trolley Case with extending handle

Comprises of KRLO3 Rig (as RL04 below but with large battery pack holder)

C Bracket and over head carry handle on twin 19cm long rails for adjusting to exact centre of gravity



Follow Focus 4 – fast snap fit - with two flexible cable controls [plug in control knobs on flexible cables] 24cm and 38cm and a fast crank handle [provides 3 ways of operating - use knurled knob, speed crank or knob on flexible cable
Matte Box (see under matte box) 2 with C Bracket and Hinge ideal for all types of DSLR and high end video
Twin fully adjustable handles
Big Lens support fully adjustable



KOOD RIG 4 SET



Kood Rig 4 set is not packed in an alloy case, nor comprehensive accessories supplied, Matte Box 3 is Pro DSLR type with two filter carriers but does not swing to one side (details under matte boxes)

Shoulder Pad

20cm pair of rails

28cm pair of rails

Couple together to make 48cm twin rail

Sliding and lock camera platform, 3cm height adjustment, 1/4 and 3/8 tripod threads and a 13cm sliding and lock camera plate

29.5 cm cross rail with 2 x handles 360 degree adjustment on handles and on rail
KF3 Follow Focus kit

KOOD RIG 002 SET



Camera Platform, mounted on 15mm dia. cross rail

2 handles 360 degree rotation and lock 19cm 15mm dia. rail and shoulder pad

Shoulder pad has velcro strap for attaching battery packs etc

KR002 set as above but with

Follow Focus 1

Matte Box 1

KOOD Rig 002 Plus set – as above

But with 90 degree curved 15mm rod and overhead carry handle

KOOD RIG 001 SET



This simple light rig has a single handle block with a 15mm cross rod and clamp to hold the shoulder pad rod and another cross rod. The block has two 15mm 60mm apart clamps and a sliding quick release pad for the camera. Two 15mm dia. x 18cm length rods are provided – so all types of accessories can fit and it can also be converted into a two handle rig
KRL001 set – as above with follow focus 1

KOOD DSRL Rig 1
A comprehensive and versatile pressed steel rig providing a stable platform for video etc with handles and shoulder support – fantastic value and very rigid – can be used with standard twin 15mm dia. rod 60mm apart fitting with an extra attachment (this enables all Follow Focus and Matte Boxes etc) – without the attachment only the follow focus F2 can be used

Heavy Duty Alloy Cradles



KC1 for 5D2 and most cameras
KC2 for 5D3 and most cameras

Mounting Block with twin 15mm dia. 60mm apart 18cm rails has 1/4 and 3/8 tripod

Cage has 34 x 1/4 female threaded holes – you can hang everything on this, incomparable for tripod work

Supplied with overhead handle

KOOD Follow Focus 00

All Kood Follow Focus units are supplied with Gear Belt

Basic unit with gear belt for standard 15mm dia. 60mm apart rods

Adjustable height

Can be used both sides of lens but gear wheel cannot be reversed as with all other KOOD Follow Focus devices – nor can you use flexi knobs or speed crank

KOOD Follow Focus F1



Slip free gear driven from either side of the lens – gear wheel can be reversed

Fits std 15mm dia. 60mm apart rods – fully adjustable

Focus indicator

KOOD Follow Focus F2



Same as F1 but separate L plate provided for fitting into the base plate of the camera

Can be used without a rig or with rig 1 by fixing directly to the camera as well as with all rigs that have standard twin 15mm dia. rods 60mm apart

KOOD Follow Focus F3



Slip free gear driven (can be used either side of the lens gear wheel can be reversed)

Adjustable stops and indicator

Use with std twin 15mm dia. rods 60mm apart

Compatible to all DSLR/Video Cameras

Easy mounting and adjust

KOOD Follow Focus F4

Same as F3 except that the twin rail fitting is a snap fit adjust and tighten



Matte Box 1



For use with Digital SLR a simple rig mounting Matte Box which fits onto std 15mm twin rails 60mm apart - adjustable for height

No provision for filters

Matte Box 2



Two independently rotating filter holders accepting 4" x 4" and 4" x 5.6" filters, two black masks provided so that 4" x 4" filters fit perfectly

Adjustable side wings and top wing

Front 247mm x 158mm with attachable black mask 203mm x 115mm

140mm lens aperture with 4 different rubber baffles for snug lens fit to all lens sizes



Mounts on rig with L bracket for std twin 15mm rods 60mm apart, rig is hinged so you can swing it away from and onto lens

Serious bit of kit

Matte Box 3 For DSLR and all size Video Cameras

Two filter holders accepting 100mm square filters rear filter holder rotates 360 degrees for polarizers

Front 200mm x 120mm with adjustable side wings and top wing



Mounts any device that has English/Continental male screw and clamps a 15mm – 30mm dia. rod or other item Jaw

spread 44mm depth from centre of the V Jaws 15mm

KOOD Magic Arm



18cm fixes to camera shoe or English male tripod thread, ball and two 55mm arm with 360 degree lockable and fixed joint, ends in ball with English male thread – the joint and ball ends all lock with the joint knob

KOOD Magic Arm 28cm
Two 100mm arms – detail as above



KOOD L bracket



For rails to attach matte box 2 to the rig rails – use with spare rails

KOOD C Bracket



Fits std 15mm dia. rails 60mm apart for attaching over head carry handle etc – use with spare rail set

KOOD Over head handle – use with C bracket and twin 15mm spare rails

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www.koodinternational.com

KOOD Cranked Bracket

For 2 sets of twin 15mm dia. rails, for monitor etc



KOOD Spare twin



19cm 15mm dia. rails

KOOD Zoom gear belt and lever

KOOD Speed crank

For single finger operation on all follow focus devices



KOOD Flex control



12" length for all Follow Focus devices from O1 – O4, click fit into centre of control knob provides control knob on a flexible cable

KOOD Flex Control 18" cable

KOOD Single rod clamp

With female tripod thread



KOOD Sliding and lock camera platform



3cm height adjustment, 1/4 and 3/8 tripod threads and a 13 cm large sliding and lock camera plate and rails

KOOD three wheel Dolly

Triangle base plate 24cm between axle centres

18.5 degree adjustment on each wheel so it can move from a straight line to a 360 degree spin

3 NBF 60mm dia. Skate Wheels

English/Continental male item attachment screw

Continued on next column...

KOOD Sliders

Super smooth with slight resistance for smoother controlled sliding by hand, far better than cranked without crank

Whole track can be mounted on a stand or tripod via central plate with English and Continental female threads

60cm

80cm

100cm

120cm



KOOD Small four wheel Dolly

136 mm plate between axle centres, wheels on both axles are 110mm apart, plate has angle calibration indicators

4 x NBF 60mm dia. Skate Wheels

English male tripod screw



KOOD for wheel Dolly 2

190 mm plate between axles – Metal plate 7mm thick for extreme rigidity will take any weight

Wheels on both axles 177mm apart for good stability

4 x 74mm dia.
NDFS Skate Board Wheels
2 X 75mm x 8mm dia.
mounting towers included



KOOD Set of Two

75mm x 80mm dia. Mounting Towers for all KOOD Dollies (shown here on the three wheeled dollies)



Carbon Steady Cam 120cm with connectors and rods for Matte Box

KOOD 120cm Steady Camera Device

KOOD Single Spring Vest for 120cm fluid type control over 15" (Steady Movement)

KOOD Single Spring Vest for 120cm fluid type control over 30" (for more rapid jerky movement as in running, reportage work)

KOOD Lightweight Steady Camera Device - designed for use without vest or springs



CAN BE ORDERED FROM ANY INDEPENDENT RETAILER

K O O D

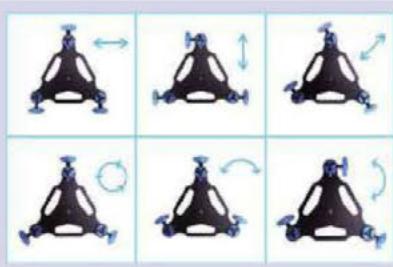
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Back Caps

Canon AF
Canon FD
M42 screw
Sony/Min AF
Sony NEX
Minolta MD
Nikon
Olympus OM
Olympus 4/3
Olympus m 4/3
Pentax K
Yashica/Contax

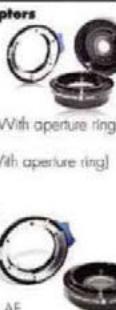


Body Caps

Canon AF
Canon FD
M42 screw
Sony/Min AF
Sony NEX
Minolta MD
Nikon
Olympus OM
Olympus 4/3
Olympus m 4/3
Pentax K
Contax/Yashica

Adapters

Camera - Lens Adapters
Can AF - FD
Can AF - M42
Can AF - Nikon
Can FD - M42
Oly M4/3 - CAF
Oly 4/3 - Can AF (With aperture ring)
Oly M4/3 - Nikon
Oly M4/3 - Nikon (With aperture ring)
Oly M4/3 - Leica M
Sony/Min AF - MD
Sony/Min AF - M42
Minolta MD - M42
Nikon - M42
Pentax K - M42
Sony NEX - Can AF
Sony NEX - Sony/Min AF
Sony NEX - Nikon AF
Sony NEX - Nik AI and G
Sony NEX - PK
Yash/Can - M42



C Mounts

Canon AF
Canon FD
M42
Nikon
Olympus OM
Pentax K
T2 Thread
Microscope adaptor



T2 Adapters

Can AF
Can FD
Nikon
Olympus OM
Olympus AF
Olympus 4/3
Oly Micro 4/3
Sony/Min AF
Minolta MD
Pentax K



Series 7

37mm
46mm
49mm
52mm
55mm
58mm
62mm
67mm



Reversing Rings

Can AF 52mm
Can AF 58mm
Can FD 52mm
Can FD 55mm
Yash/Cont 52mm
M42 49mm
M42 52mm
M42 55mm
M42 58mm
Min MD 49mm
Min MD 52mm
Min MD 58mm
Sony/Min AF 55

Nikon 52mm
Nikon 58mm
Praktica B 49mm
Pentax K 49mm
Pentax K 52mm
Pentax K 55mm
Pentax K 58mm

Camera Viewing accessories

Screen Hoods
Canon 50D
Canon 350D
Canon 450D
Nikon D70
Nikon D80
Nikon D300

Full shield magnifying Screen Hoods

Canon 5D/7D/500D
Canon 550D/Nikon 500D
Canon 60D/600D

Eye Cups

Canon 550D type
Nikon D300 type
Chinon
Fujica
Nikon F type
Praktica
Prism Right Angle Viewer

Shutter Release Items

[CR with Locking Collar T]
10' Metal Cable Release
18' Metal Cable release
24' Metal Cable release
36' Metal Cable release
10' Vinyl Cable release
18' Vinyl Cable Release
20' Vinyl Cable release
36' Vinyl Cable release
20' Air release



Camera Care Items

Jumbo Hurricane Brush
Large Blower Brush
Medium Blower Brush
Small Blower brush
Lipstick Lens Brush
Lens Tissues
Small Micro Fibre
[Lens cloth]
Large Micro Fibre
[Lens cloth]
Lens Cleaning Solution
4 Piece Cleaning set
7 Piece Cleaning Set
[In White Snap Box]
2 x Silica Gel
4 x Silica Gel
3 x Digital Screen Protect
(Squeegee and cleaning)
Contact Cleaning Pen
Red Eye Pen



Camera Sling Strap

[Shock absorbing with
Concealed Wire, tripod:
Bush attach] strap
Double concealed wire strap
Wrist strap bush fitting

Comfort Straps

[Wide Neoprene, loose stitched
Backing, reverse quick release
Catches makes hand strap]
Black



Royal Blue
For Canon
For Nikon
For Minolta
For Minolta
For Pentax
For Olympus

30mm-38mm Wide Straps

Plain Black, embossed
For Canon, embossed
For Nikon, embossed
For Minolta, embossed
For Olympus, embossed
For Pentax, embossed
Hand Grip with Camera Platform
Narrow black strap 25mm

Loop Fitting Strap

Metallic Neck Strap
Metallic Wrist Strap

Rain Covers

Basic Rain Cover
Large
Medium
Summer
Winter



Dark Room

16"x17" Changing Bag
27"x29" Changing Bag#
3"x4x5" Changing Bag
10 piece Film Dev Kit
14 Piece Film and print Dev Kit
Dark Room Apron
Straight Tank Thermometer
Angled Dish Thermometer
2 XS/Steel film Clips
3 x Bamboo Print Tonga
Print/film squeegee
Univ Dev Tank 2 x Spirals
35mm Univ Tank
Spare Univ Spiral
3 x 7"x10" Dev Trays
3 x 12"x16" Dev Trays
3 x 12"x16" Dev Trays
3 x 16"x20" Dev Tray
3 x 16"x20" Dev Trays
3 x 24"x20" Dev Trays



Graduated Beakers with Handle

500cc
100cc
2000cc
Graduated H/Duty Measures

50cc
100cc
250cc
300cc
450cc
1000cc

Safelight free standing Or wall fixing

Yellow
Green
Orange
Red

Flash Accessories

Inverted cone attachment give soft daylight result for

Canon 40EX
Canon 580EX
Canon 380EX
Nikon SB 600
Nikon SB 900

Diffusers

Canon 380EX

Canon 420EX

Canon 430EX

Canon 540EX

Canon 550EX

Canon 580EX

Nikon SB 600

Nikon SB 800

Nikon SB 900

For P up Flash

Soft Flash Elasticated Cover

Flash Brackets

Straight Flash Bracket

Angle Flash Bracket

Pro Bracket 1

Pro Bracket 2

Pro Bracket 3

Pro Bracket 5

Hot Shoe Co axial

Hot shoe with lead

Flash Slave Unit

Flash Slave Unit with Sucker

Flash Slave Nikon TTL

Flash Leads PC

PC straight

1m Straight

3m Straight

5m Straight

10m Straight

3m Coiled

5m Coiled

Flash Leads PC - two pin AC

0.5m straight

1m straight

2m straight

3m straight

5m straight



Flash Leads PC

PC straight

1m straight

3m straight

5m straight

10m straight

3m Coiled

5m Coiled

Flash Leads PC - two pin AC

0.5m straight

1m straight

2m straight

3m straight

5m straight



Loop Fitting Strap

Metallic Neck Strap

Metallic Wrist Strap

Collapsible rubber

40.5mm

43mm

46mm

49mm

52mm

55mm

58mm

67mm

72mm

77mm

Wide Angle

49mm

52mm

55mm

58mm

62mm

67mm

72mm

77mm

82mm

86mm

95mm

Lens Hood

With center grips

49mm

52mm

55mm

58mm

62mm

67mm

72mm

77mm

82mm

86mm

95mm

White Balance Snap Caps

52mm

55mm

58mm

62mm

67mm

72mm

77mm

Lens Pouches

With draw string

75x90mm

75x110mm

90x140mm

90x170mm

90x200mm

Zipped lid and filter compartment

Small

Medium

Large

Extra Large

Shoe Fitting Spirit Levels

2 Way

2 Way for Sony

3 Bubble

3 Bubble for Sony

Photographic Accessories

Combi Two stage WA - Tele



Non Collapsible Lens Hood

Petal Hood Screw fit can be Rotated to centralise



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Stepping Rings

Stepping Ring 25-28mm
 Stepping Ring 25-30mm
 Stepping Ring 25-37mm
 Stepping Ring 27-28mm
 Stepping Ring 27-30mm
 Stepping Ring 27-37mm
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Stepping Ring 72-58mm
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 Stepping Ring 77-72mm
 Stepping Ring 77-82mm
 Stepping Ring 82-67mm
 Stepping Ring 82-72mm
 Stepping Ring 82-77mm
 Stepping Ring 82-86mm
 Stepping Ring 86-82mm
 Hasselblad Adapter B50-52
 Hasselblad Adapter B50-55
 Hasselblad Adapter B50-58
 Hasselblad Adapter B50-67
 Hasselblad Adapter B60-58
 Hasselblad Adapter B60-62
 Hasselblad Adapter B70-72
 Rollei Adapter 66-67mm
 Rollei Adapter 66-72mm

Scrapbook 3L

100x Adhesive dots small
 100x Adhesive dots Medium
 100x Adhesive dots Large
 500 x White Mounting Squares
 250 x Clear Mounting Corners
 250 x Reg 32mm M, Corners
 250 x 32mm Max View M, Corners
 100 x 75mm Mounting Corners
 100 x 75mm Max view M, Corners
 25m Double Sided Tape
 6m Super High Tack tape
 250 x 10mm Clear Photo Corners
 500 x 10mm Clear Photo Corners
 250 x Photo Fix
 500 x Photo Fix
 3 x A4c Self Laminating Cards
 3 x A5 Self Laminating Cards
 3 x 150 x 100mm S, Lam Cards
 10m Easy Runner Per adhesive
 Easy Mini Dots dispenser

STUDIO

107cm Reflector
 120cm Cube Light
 50cm Cube light
 50cm Reflector
 80cm Reflector
 80cm Reflector Silver Glass
 90cm Cube light
 92x122 Reflector (5 in 1)
 Universal Umbrella Bracket
 Black/Gold Studio Umbrella 24"
 Black/Gold Studio Umbrella 33"
 Black/Gold Studio Umbrella 36"
 Black/Gold Studio Umbrella 40"
 Black/Gold Studio Umbrella 43"
 Black/Gold Studio Umbrella 47"
 Black/Gold Studio Umbrella 51"
 Black/Silver Studio Umbrella 24"
 Black/Silver Studio Umbrella 33"
 Black/Silver Studio Umbrella 36"

Black/Silver Studio Umbrella 40"
 Black/Silver Studio Umbrella 43"
 Black/Silver Studio Umbrella 47"
 Black/Silver Studio Umbrella 51"
 Black/White Studio Umbrella 24"
 Black/White Studio Umbrella 33"
 Black/White Studio Umbrella 36"
 Black/White Studio Umbrella 40"
 Black/White Studio Umbrella 43"
 Black/White Studio Umbrella 47"
 Black/White Studio Umbrella 51"
 Studio Background Stand Kit

Tripods and Ball Heads

Tripod Bushes Eng.-Cont
**Pro Tripods with long and short col,
 3 step leg splay, bag hook, case**

Shoulder strap

28mm Alloy 4 section

22mm 4 Section Carbon Fibre

28mm 4 Section Carbon Fibre

32mm 4 Section Carbon Fibre

Spare Tool Kit

Pro Monopods 4 section

28mm Alloy

22mm Carbon Fibre

28mm Carbon Fibre

32mm Carbon Fibre

Light weight Alloy with pan tilt, spirit level Geared centre col. Plus case

23mm three section

26mm three section

Ball and Socket Heads

24mm series 0 Sd BS Large
 30mm series 0 Sd BS small
 36mm series 0 QR Plate 1
 36mm series 1 QR Plate 2
 44mm series 1 QR Plate 3
 54mm series 1 QR Plate 4
 36mm series 2 QR Plate 5
 44mm series 2 QR Plate 6
 54mm series 2 QR Plate 7 for L/Alloy
 36mm series 3
 44mm series 3
 54mm series 3
 105mm 3 Way
 120mm 3 Way



Flexible Grip Pads

Small

Medium

Large

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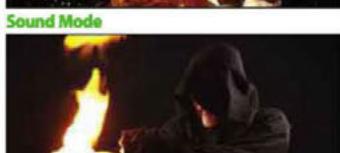
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A SENTIMENTAL DANIEL LEZANO RECALLS SOME OF THE MEMORABLE MOMENTS FROM A CENTURY OF ISSUES



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THE FIRST ISSUE OF *Digital SLR Photography* was released onto an unsuspecting public in late 2006 and it's fair to say the magazine has seen a lot happen since. We've had many moments that were truly hilarious, some that were downright depressing and many, many events that we can't reveal for fear of being sued! Let's just say the first 100 issues have been a real roller coaster ride with many twists along the way, but thankfully far more highs than lows. So, if you've reached the end of the magazine and have a couple of minutes to spare, I hope you don't mind my slight indulgence as I share a few of these memorable moments and events with you (well, those I'm allowed to talk about in public anyway).

Let's start at the very beginning, a very good place to start, as Julie Andrews sang in the *Sound Of Music*. Any of you with a copy of issue one will note it was a pretty solid issue, bar one or two (maybe more) spelling errors. What you'll not have known is that the maiden issue was created by an in-house team of two (myself and art editor, Luke) in only 23 days. In those days the magazine was produced by a company we'd set up and named after our favourite Xbox 360 game (*Halo*), our office had no broadband (thanks to a major telecoms cock-up), we slept in the office for at most an hour each night as we had so much work to do, and, despite it being sub-zero outside – it would be two months before we'd discover the air-con could also supply heating.

From those cold, long days (and nights) at the start, things improved, but we still worked through the night on many occasions, fuelled only by large pizzas, lots of Coke (the fizzy variety) and

gallons of tea. It was on one of these nights when the entire building began to suddenly shake, pictures fell off walls and Luke and I cuddled cowering beneath the meeting table. It turned out to be only a minor earthquake by all accounts, but it was enough to leave us requiring a longer than average toilet break afterwards...

One other night stands out, when in the early hours I received a call from the police to say the office had been broken into. It turned out all the computers – on which the issue that we were working on were stored – had been stolen. Thankfully, our set-up for off-site back-up ensured the magazine was produced on time – just!

Of course, a magazine is only ever as good as the people that put it together and in that regard I've been very lucky to work with some real talent (of which I can sincerely say the current is undoubtedly the best). Despite the hard work, long hours and ruthless deadlines, we've always (well almost always) had fun putting each issue together.

"Despite earthquakes, robberies and various mishaps, we're still here!"

I wish I could reveal some of the moments of mayhem, madness and hilarity we've shared in the office, but I don't have a good enough lawyer. All I'll say is that over the last 100 issues, we've had animals foul the office, witnessed more broken limbs and wardrobe malfunctions than we care to remember and almost burned down the building, twice. And let's not forget the time we used a smoke machine in the car park for a shoot that led to a couple of fire engines being called by our office neighbours.

Despite earthquakes, robberies and various mishaps, we're still here. It's been an eventful and memorable century of the magazine. We'd like to thank you for helping it happen – here's to 100 more! ☺



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